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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should the CNMI set up its own islandwide tsunami warning system?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

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Poster Art
Three students were named top winners in the 2010 CNMI Census Student Poster Contest.

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Heroism and banditry mingle on Chile's shattered streets.

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Oscar Bets
"The Hurt Locker" and "Avatar," widely considered the Oscar frontrunners, couldn't be more different.

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Megarr's contract with CUC 'in limbo' PAGE 2

Retirees group won't support Jorgensen lawsuit vs Fund. PAGE 6

Up to $15M budget cut seen

» House panel to remove 'unpaid holidays' in austerity measure

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The CNMI government's projected revenue for Fiscal Year 2010, which ends on Sept. 30, will be revised to reflect a cut of $10 million to $15 million—from the year-ago budget submission of $150 million to as low as $135 million, acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

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HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

RED CROSS MONTH
Acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos, right, prepares to sign a proclamation declaring March 2010 American Red Cross Month while American Red Cross-NMI Chapter board chair JD Guerrero, looks on during a ceremony in the governor's conference room on Capital Hill yesterday afternoon. Inos also proclaimed March 2010 Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

CNMI student tops Guam youth music competition

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

A 13-year-old student from the CNMI emerged champion in the recently concluded 2010 Young Artists' Competition sponsored by the Guam Symphony Society.

Zhen Yu Su, an eighth grader from Grace Christian Academy, represented the Do Re Mi Music School in the competition

See STUDENT on Page 4

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Do Re Mi Music School owner and violin teacher Ao Zhang, left, poses yesterday with his student Zhen Yu Su, 13, who won first place in the solo performance category, Junior High Division, at the 2010 Young Artists Competition in Guam.

Judge Manglona recommended to replace Munson

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has recommended CNMI Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona to President Barack Obama to become the next chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the NMI, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

The position was left vacant by Alex. R. Munson, who retired effective Feb. 28, 2010, after serving the federal court for 22 years.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) also submitted two names of lawyers in the

Manglona

See MANGLONA on Page 4

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Local

Megarr's contract with CUC 'in limbo'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The employment contract of Bruce Megarr, deputy director for the Water and Wastewater Division of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., is in limbo as the management has yet to issue an official notice whether his contract will be renewed or not.

Megarr's contract is set to expire on March 30. Pursuant to law, a 30-day notice has to be sent out to the employee on the status of his employment.

The deputy director confirmed with the *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that he has yet to receive a formal written notice from CUC executive director Tony Muna about his employment.

"All I received was an e-mail [from Mr. Muna], saying that my position is being advertised. That's it," Megarr said.

He said he does not know how the management will decide on his contract but he vowed to continue performing his duties as long as he is not advised to stop.

"I will continue to empower my staff to achieve goals…provide the structure, training, and supervision necessary," he said.

Saipan Tribune learned that Megarr and the CUC executive director are currently in "negotiation" but Megarr refused to comment on this.

Megarr was hired in 2008 for a two-year contract.

Muña was off-island yesterday, while assistant executive director Abe Utu Malae did not return this reporter's call for comments.

Malae earlier confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that the position announced for a "deputy director for drinking water and waste water" is the position held by Megarr.

Malae had said that Megarr is welcome to apply for the post.

When asked if he has already done so, Megarr said: "I have already expressed interest to remain in the position."

Megarr is confident that he fulfilled his duties during his two years with CUC and described his legacy as a "turning point" for the Water and Wastewater Division.

CUC has been on emergency status since 2008 due to the poor condition of the power, water, and sewer systems on three islands. These conditions have resulted in lengthy power interruptions, inadequate water supply in villages, and serious risks to people's health.

Stipulated orders

Saipan Tribune learned that since the middle of last year, Megarr had been stripped of some responsibilities that specifically dealt with the deliverables in the court's stipulated orders.

In e-mail exchanges between Megarr and assistant executive director Malae, it was revealed that "procurement development was explicitly taken over by Muña since July 2009."

Yesterday, Megarr confirmed having no involvement in works related to the stipulated orders, as advised by CUC management.

The stipulated orders represent the agreement between the CNMI and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, based on the requirements of the Clean Air Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. The stipulated orders also provide a roadmap for providing improved water and sewer services in the CNMI.

The orders were formally entered by the federal court in March 2008.

Ex-convict arrested for hit and run

An ex-convict was arrested Friday after investigators learned he was the driver of a pickup truck that left the scene after colliding with a car on Middle Road in November.

Alex Alfonso Augustine, 31, was taken to the Superior Court yesterday. Associate Judge Perry Inos released him on $200 cash bail and $1,800 unsecured bond.

Traffic investigator Joseph M. Magofna stated in his report that a vehicular accident happened along Middle Road near Coca-Cola on the evening of Nov. 17, 2009.

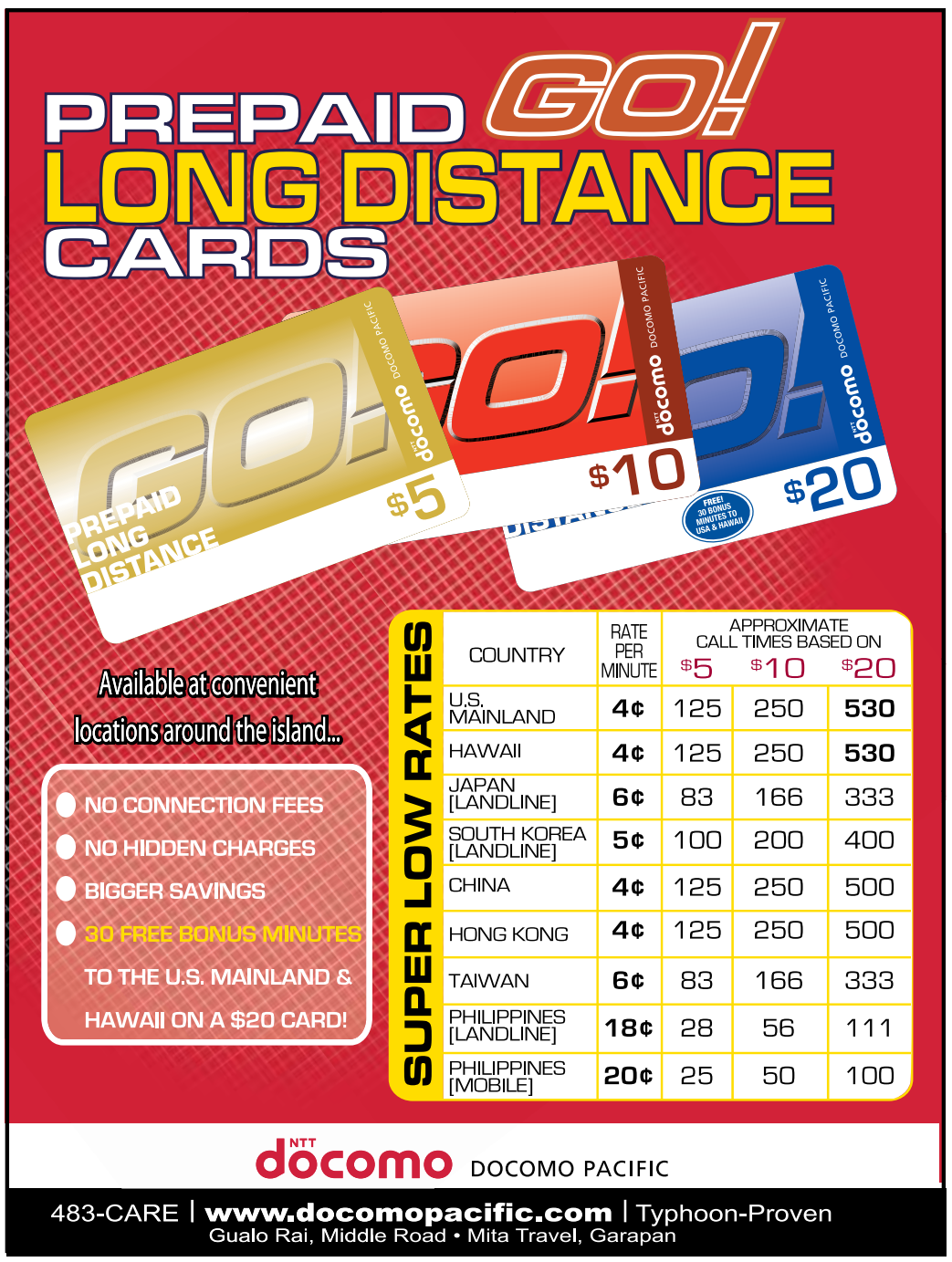
Magofna said Sonny Lopez told police that a silver pickup truck made a left turn from the inner southbound lane and struck his vehicle. The truck then made a U-turn and fled the scene.

The passenger of the truck, identified as Jordan Ongkunsel, was injured in the face after he was thrown out from the truck. Ongkunsel was on the bed of the truck when the accident happened.

Ongkunsel told police that he and Rodney Tarkong were drinking beer near the Grand Market when Augustine joined them. The three then left on board Augustine's truck.

Tarkong told police that when Augustine made a left turn, the truck collided with a car and that Ongkunsel flew off the vehicle.

Tarkong said Augustine continued driving, then later asked him to get out because he's on probation. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MRCDC seeks island reps

The Marianas Resource Conservation and Development Council invites the public to a recruitment meeting/ teleconference to nominate community representatives from Guam, Saipan, Rota and Tinian on Thursday afternoon, March 4. For island-specific time and location information or special accommodation for disability, call 472-7447 (Guam and Rota), 483-6734 (Saipan), or 433-2813 (Tinian). ***(PR)***

Oleai Elementary School PTSA meeting

The PTSA officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of Oleai Elementary School that there will be a PTSA meeting on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 6:15pm in the school cafeteria. Every one is encouraged to attend. ***(PR)***

A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

Keep our Sports Paradise safe!

Saipan drivers can help tourism by exercising cautiously on Saturday mornings this month.

This month the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) and its tourism partners will host three major sporting events aimed at attracting visitors and international media attention.

The Saipan Marathon takes place this Saturday (March 6) beginning at American Memorial Park at 4:30 a.m. with the full marathon, followed by the half-marathon at 5:45 a.m. and the 10K Fun Run at 6 a.m. Saipan drivers can help keep runners safe by staying off Beach Rd. as much as possible from 4:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. Parking in Garapan from Winchell's north to the fire station will also be closed from 3-11 that morning.

The XTERRA Saipan Championship gets underway on March 13, followed by the Tagaman Triathlon on March 20. Both runners and bikers will take to Saipan streets for those two events.

The MVA continues its work to expand on sports tourism opportunities for the islands. The Northern Marianas has several signature sporting events each year aimed at attracting visitors, including the Rota Blue Triathlon and Tinian Turquoise Blue Triathlon. Other recent investments by the MVA include upgrades to the Oleai Sports Complex to attract professional baseball teams.

Everyone can help keep our sports paradise safe.

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY
MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

‘Relocating troops to the CNMI other than on Tinian will be up to US govt’

As Japan political party pushes overseas relocation for Futenma

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos, left, talks to Japanese media yesterday at the conference room of the Office of the Governor, as press secretary Angel Demapan, center, looks on.

Acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos said yesterday that the United States government has not held any discussion with the CNMI on some Japanese lawmakers’ push for the relocation of thousands of troops from the U.S. Marine Corps Station Futenma in Okinawa to the CNMI.

He also said any relocation of U.S. troops to Tinian is a “foregone issue” given that two-thirds of the island is leased to the U.S Department of Defense.

But Inos said any discussion on relocating troops to Saipan or any part of the CNMI other than Tinian will have to be deferred to the U.S. Department of Defense which will then consult with the CNMI government.

Inos was responding to questions from a visiting Tokyo-based senior journalist, Ishiyama Eiichiro, of Kyodo News, as well as local reporters yesterday afternoon.

In Japan, the Social Democratic Party has been reported prioritizing a plan to move the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa out of the country.

This is reportedly among the options the SDP is considering presenting to a government committee studying the relocation of the Futenma base.

Among the candidate sites for relocating the Futenma base are the U.S. Pacific territories of Guam or the CNMI. If it’s in the CNMI, it could be on Tinian or Saipan.

However, if the overseas relocation plan proves difficult to implement, the party will push two further proposals, which include accommodating drills and bases domestically.

Inos reiterated Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz’s statement that Tinian has been waiting for increased military presence for the past 30 years, mainly because of expected local economic benefits tied to such activity.

“As far as any relocation into the Commonwealth outside of Tinian, that’s a matter that we essentially defer to the United States specifically… If the U.S. Department of Defense agrees to such relocation, then I’m sure we will be consulted and at the time, we will sit down and talk about desire to receive additional troops from Futenma or any place else in Japan,” Inos told reporters.

He repeatedly said that “any military relocation to the island of Tinian is not an issue here.”

“We essentially agreed to do those 30 years ago. Relocation into the CNMI outside of Tinian is a matter that should be started by the Defense Department in consultation with the CNMI people. That consultation has not commenced because the U.S. government has not asked for such consultation. So that will be our current position,”

See TROOPS on Next Page

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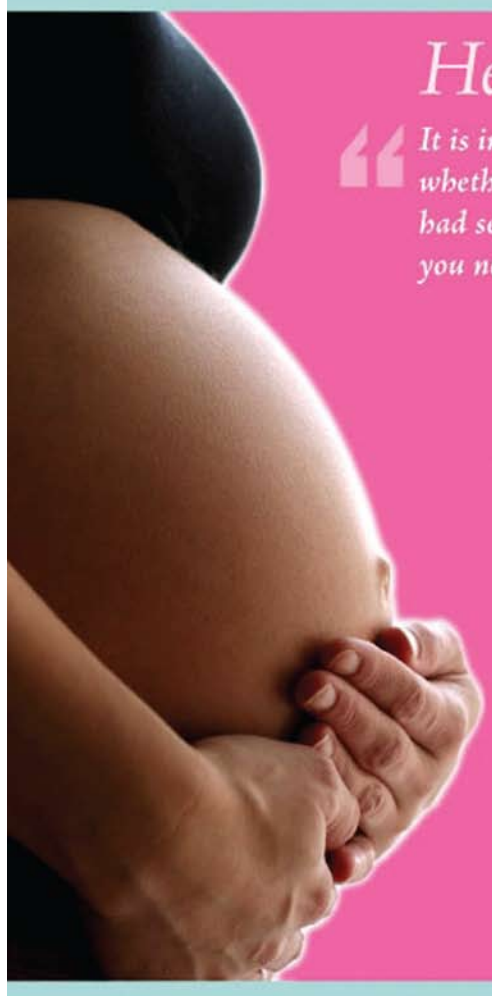

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—Angie Mister

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Supported in part by project H25MC06112 from the MCHB (Title V, Social Security Act), HRSA, DHHS.
Information adapted from U.S. Department of Health & Human Resources, womenshealth.gov

Cop arrested for alleged domestic violence

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Police arrested over the weekend a colleague who allegedly shot two rounds of his gun above the head and near the left ear of his common-law wife during a fight at their house.

Police Officer 1 Kelani Vincent Pangelinan of the Patrol Section was arrested on charges of assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, criminal mischief, disturbing the peace, illegal possession of firearms, kidnapping, and sexual assault in the first degree.

Pangelinan was taken to the Superior Court yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing.

Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo found probable cause to justify Pangelinan's arrest and imposed a $100,000 cash bail for his temporary liberty and set the preliminary hearing for March 8, 2010.

The judge ordered Pangelinan to surrender all his weapons to the Department of Public Safety.

At the hearing, assistant attorney general George Hasselback came for the government. Assistant public defender Richard Miller appeared for the defendant just for that bail hearing. Detective Peter Aldan took the witness stand.

Pangelinan allegedly accused his common-law wife of having an affair. He threw a wine bottle through the window and took out a gun.

He allegedly shot one round above the victim's head, with the bullet hitting the wall. He allegedly shot another round past her left ear.

Pangelinan allegedly did not allow the victim to leave the room and had sex with her against her will.

BUDGET

From Page 1

"We can go as low as $135 million," he said.

At the same time, the House Ways and Means Committee will be revising its austerity measures bill to remove a provision on "unpaid holidays" meant to reduce government deficit and instead stick to an every-other-Friday work cuts for the rest of the fiscal year, said committee chair Rep. Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan) in a separate interview.

Basa said some members object to further work hour cuts on top of the "austerity Fridays."

Inos will be briefing lawmakers today about the current status of government finances.

This is the first time that the Fitial administration has disclosed the need to revise the budget authority covering the two remaining quarters of FY 2010 due to much lower revenue than previously projected.

"Because of reduction in resources, we now have to reduce the budget authority by about the same amount and so we are going to be revising the spending limit. Those are one of the areas I have to discuss with Legislature to see what we can do," Inos said in an interview after signing a proclamation declaring March 2010 American Red Cross Month.

He said the government is not collecting as much in gross receipts taxes, among other things, as originally projected.

The Fitial administration's budget submission last year for FY 2010 was $150 million, but the 16th Legislature was deadlocked on the budget bill and failed to pass a timely budget on time.

The government has thus been operating under continuing resolution.

Inos said the third and fourth quarters will have to absorb whatever overexpenditures were incurred in the first two quarters.

"We have to reduce the budget authority for the remaining period. We are going to control it through the allotment process," he said.

He said laying off people would be the last resort.

"We will try to spread out whatever available funds there is to handle critical services and secondly, we have to trim down costs in non-essential areas," he added.

The Fitial administration has until April 1 to submit a proposed budget for FY 2010.

Inos said the FY 2011 budget will also reflect the 2010 level.

'We need more work hour cuts'

In another interview, Inos said reducing the normal 80-hour work hours every pay period to 72 will not help balance the budget.

"If it's about balancing the budget, we need more than 72 hours. But this is a matter that needs to be discussed with the [legislative] leadership. I have asked for a leadership meeting [Tuesday]," he told reporters.

Inos said the administration is waiting for an austerity measures bill, but this has yet to be acted on.

"As far as reduction in cost is concerned, nothing has come up by way of an austerity [bill]. We may have to do our own austerity here, which is work hour reduction for contract employees, and definitely we need legislation to address civil service cost reduction," he said.

Basa's Ways and Means Committee met yesterday morning to further discuss his austerity measures bill.

In an interview, Basa said the removal of the "unpaid holidays" provision in his bill is a result of a "compromise" with other committee members.

The original bill would have reduced the deficit by some $5.5 million. Basa said this will be reduced by some 20 percent because of the removal of the "unpaid holidays" provision.

"So now it will only be austerity Fridays. To be fair, the austerity Fridays will apply to all departments and agencies and autonomous agencies like the Public School System and Northern Marianas College. Constitutionally protected salaries are encouraged to have a 10 percent voluntary pay cut," he said.

TROOPS

From Page 3

Inos added.

Inos also said he's not aware that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has spoke with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden or any key official in Washington, D.C. regarding the relocation of troops to the CNMI.

But while the CNMI looks to economic benefits associated with relocation of troops, it has raised concerns with the Guam-CNMI military buildup's draft environmental impact statement.

"The benefit would have to be translated to net benefit. There are socio-economic issues and impacts that would have to be discussed, reviewed, studied and debated and so forth," he said.

Inos is hopeful the military buildup will really "lead do something positive for the people of the Commonwealth."

"But again there are issues. We currently have issues with respect to the draft environmental impact statement that has been prepared with respect to the existing plan to utilize the island of Tinian so if you can imagine if you have socio-economic issues with respect to that plan that's already agreed to, then how much more issues where we have talk about relocation issues other than Tinian in the Commonwealth," he said.

Japan's Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa earlier downplayed the idea of relocating up to 4,000 U.S. troops from the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa to Tinian.

The Fitial administration has repeatedly said that the Commonwealth welcomes such relocation consideration "only if such plan is supported and approved by the U.S. federal government and the Department of Defense."

Tinian is one of the major islands in the U.S. territory of the CNMI.

"We are by no means trying to entice the Japanese government to push for the relocation of a base in the CNMI as this is solely a decision that will be made by the U.S. government. The administration and the MIMC will respect and support any such decisions that are made," the Fitial administration had said.

The up to 4,000 considered to be relocated to Tinian is in addition to the estimated 8,000 Marines and their 9,000 dependents who are expected to be relocated by 2014, although Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho asked for the military buildup to be delayed until after 2014.

STUDENT

From Page 1

that saw the participation of 30 other students from Guam.

Su won first place in the junior high division that was held Jan. 27. He was then invited as the finale performer in the showcase concert that took place at the Hyatt Regency Guam last Feb. 26.

"It was exciting and wonderful!" Su told *Saipan Tribune* about his experience.

He said he will continue to participate in the event and would seek other opportunities for off-island contests. To maximize his potential, Su vows to practice diligently so he would gain more experience.

According to Helen Middlebrooke, young artist coordinator for the Guam Symphony Society, Yu's performance brought a new level to the competition and inspired young violinists to work even harder.

Su amazed judges and spectators with his masterful performance of *Carmen Fantasy* by Pablo de Sarasate, considered among the most difficult ones for young violinists. The audience gave Su a standing ovation after his performance.

Saipan Tribune learned that Su emerged top in all the competition's criteria, including technique, rhythm, dynamics, phrasing and interpretation, intonation, preparation and presentation.

Su was also the champion in his division during 2009 Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam where he was also honored and invited to special performances. His winning piece then was also a Sarasate composition, *Zigeunerweisen.*

Saipan Tribune learned that the student started playing the violin when he was just 6 years old, when his family sent him to the Do Re Mi Music School under the guidance of Ao Zhang, his music instructor and owner/president of the music school.

"Violin has a beautiful sound. It cheers me up," Su said.

Prior to the competition in January, Su and Zhang spent six hours daily in rehearsals and preparations.

"We put a lot of hard work and sacrifice on this…and we're very happy with the result," the music instructor said.

Because of his recent success, Su has been invited to a special performance with the Guam Symphony Orchestra in October this year.

Zhang said that his student has started preparations for the event, with *Bruch Movements 1-3* in mind.

"We're very excited for this performance because this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. He will be performing with the whole orchestra. Su will definitely give the audience a great show and we're very grateful for this opportunity," said Zhang, who has over 20 years of experience in the music industry.

Zhang described his student as a talented boy who plays music from his heart.

Su is the youngest son of Hong Chao Chen and Ying Qi Su.

His mother disclosed that ever since he was a child, Su had already shown great interest in playing the violin. She expressed the family's full support for Su's goal of becoming a great musician.

Besides playing the violin, Su also enjoys playing basketball and volleyball.

The DoReMi Music School on Saipan was founded in April 1992. Besides the annual grand recital of its students, the school also throws benefit concerts for senior citizens, the hospital, Flame Tree Festival, and other community events.

Zhang, the music instructor and founder of the school, entered Tian Jin Conservatory of Music in 1970 and had played with the Tian Jin Orchestra. In 1991, he came to Saipan and started his school.

MANGLONA

From Page 1

CNMI to Obama for consideration as Munson's replacement.

Sablan, however, declined to disclose the names of those he recommended.

Fitial wrote a letter to Obama recommending Manglona as early as Oct. 22, 2009. A copy of the letter has just been obtained by *Saipan Tribune*.

"The people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands would be very honored were you to nominate a daughter of the Commonwealth to the post. I humbly recommend Ramona Villagomez Manglona, a sitting Superior Court judge in the Commonwealth courts," Fitial told Obama in a two-page letter.

District court judges are appointed by the U.S. president, with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate to 10-year terms or until a successor is chosen and qualified.

Fitial, who is expected to be back this week from Washington, D.C., said Manglona's appointment would represent the attainment of two important milestones for the Northern Marianas.

If nominated and confirmed, Manglona would be both the first female chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the CNMI and the first chief judge born in what is now the CNMI.

"Each of these accomplishments would be an immense source of pride for our citizens," Fitial told Obama.

Fitial described Manglona as an "exceptional judge," and is someone who "sets the highest judicial standards for herself and expects no less from her colleagues."

The governor said Manglona is "ethical, hardworking, a legal intellectual, and most importantly, fair."

"If nominated and confirmed, Judge Manglona will continue to uphold all laws, ensure that all Americans have access to justice, and that they are treated fairly," Fitial told Obama.

Manglona is a 1996 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law, where she graduated with honors. She is admitted to practice law in the State of New Mexico, the CNMI, the U.S. District Court for the NMI, and the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

After law school, Manglona served as a law clerk in the Commonwealth Superior Court.

She later served as an assistant attorney general in both Criminal and Civil Divisions of the CNMI Office of the Attorney General for four years, before being nominated by then Gov. Juan N. Babauta and confirmed by the CNMI Senate as the attorney general.

In 2003, Babauta once again nominated Manglona, this time for the position of associate judge for the CNMI Superior Court. The Senate confirmed her nomination, and she has since presided over both criminal and civil cases.

Manglona also served as justice pro tempore for the Guam Supreme Court and Judge Pro Tempore for the Guam Superior Court.

Prior to becoming a judge, Manglona also served the NMI Bar Association in different capacities—as president, treasurer and director.

NMC, GCC take part in exclusive accreditation seminar

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges conducted an exclusive two-day self-study training on accreditation for the Northern Marianas College and the Guam Community College in Guam.

The event, held at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Guam in Tumon last weekend, was intended to help both institutions prepare for their respective self-study visits in 2012.

NMC sent 15 representatives to the event, led by Board of Regents vice chair Paz Younis and interim president Lorraine Cabrera. Others on the NMC team included administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

According to NMC accreditation liaison officer Galvin Deleon Guerrero, the involvement of all college sectors is key to meeting all the accreditation goals of the college.

"It was essential that our team represented a broad cross-section of the college, especially since a self-study report should engage everyone in the college in a meaningful reflection on what we're doing to support our mission and promote student learning," said Deleon Guerrero, adding that it was particularly reassuring that five instructional faculty and two students participated. He said this was lauded by the ACCJC team.

ACCJC's vice president for team operations Jack Pond facilitated the workshop that focused on accreditation eligibility requirements, standards, and policies. He also offered practical advice on preparing for both the self-study report and the self-study visit.

An ACCJC self-study report and visit are held in between an institution's full accreditation terms. Typically held every six years, the purpose of a self-study is to promote institution-wide reflection about educational quality and student learning and to identify an action plan to address areas of growth until the next self-study.

Daniel Kintol, one of the officers of the Associated Students of NMC, described his participation as a great opportunity for students.

"NMC will be the first educational institution to allow student governments to partake in the accreditation workshop," he said

Interim college president Cabrera, for her part, said: "We are fortunate that the accrediting commission hosted this type of training so close to home. The knowledge and information we gained from the training will prove invaluable as NMC begins to prepare its comprehensive self-study report that's due in two years."

NMC's accreditation was reaffirmed in June 2009. It submitted its midterm report in October last year.

Although it accepted the midterm report, ACCJC had said that the series of events at the college may still affect NMC's accreditation status, alluding to the January suspension of NMC president Carmen Fernandez. The commission had also expressed concern about alleged "false information" contained in NMC's midterm report.

Court staff hurt in vehicular collision

Couple arrested for leaving accident scene

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Police arrested Friday two occupants of a pickup truck who fled the scene after their vehicle allegedly struck a car along As Lito Road last month that left a court employee injured.

John Gerardo Masuli, 48, and his common-law wife, Linda Pascual, 54, were arrested for "hit and run."

The victim, Rosie Ada, a deputy clerk at the Superior Court, suffered contusions and abrasions to the head and back. She was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center after the accident.

During yesterday's hearing, Superior Court associate judge Perry Inos imposed a bail of $210 cash plus $1,890 unsecured bond for Masuli, and $200 cash plus $1,800 unsecured bond for Pascual.

Inos set the arraignment for March 18.

Sgt. Thomas Blas Jr. stated in his report that on Feb. 18 at 9:38pm a police officer responded to a car crash at the intersection of As Lito Road near the Happy Market area.

Blas said preliminary investigation showed that Ada was driving south on a Mazda Protégé sedan along As Lito Road when a Toyota pickup being driven by Masuli exited the intersection.

The truck did not yield, hitting the car in the middle of the intersection.

After the collision, Masuli and his passenger, Pascual, fled on foot, leaving their truck at the scene.

A police officer later talked with Pascual at her residence. Masuli was not in the house. Masuli later told the officer on the phone that he had ran away, afraid that he might be arrested. Masuli told the officer that it was the Mazda car that struck his pickup truck.

Blas said that during his interview with Ada on Feb. 22, she stated that she was heading south on As Lito on her way to As Perdido to meet some friends. As she approached the intersection north of Happy Market, she saw the truck not stopping at the intersection. Ada said she attempted to avoid the truck by swerving to the left, but that it was too late.

Blas said Pascual told her that she, Masuli, and another friend, had just come from a poker arcade and were heading to Finasisu when the car hit their truck.

Masuli was allegedly drinking at a friend's house before he, Pascual and a friend proceeded to the poker arcade.

CUC urges actions to preserve Saipan aquifers this dry season

The Water and Wastewater Division of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is advising its customers to begin conserving water now in preparation for the upcoming dry season in April and May.

In a statement issued yesterday, CUC said that during the last dry season, two of CUC's largest aquifers ran dry and saltwater intrusion affected most of its other wells. On average, salinity increased 22 percent during this period, CUC said.

The agency said it is proactively sealing leaks in the system and identifying unbilled or improperly billed water users.

"We prosecute where possible in coordination with the police and Attorney General's office. We estimate fully 25 to 35 percent of your water is being used without being paid for. Help us distribute the cost of providing water fairly by helping us make those who use water pay for it," said CUC in the statement.

More water meters are being placed in the ground daily, CUC said, providing incentive for customers to conserve and distributing the costs of water production fairly.

Here is how you can conserve and save money:

■ The toilet is the single largest user of water in most homes. It is also the one device most often prone to failure. Look for leaks and water movement in the bowl five minutes after a flush. If you see movement or current, the valving in the tank may have failed. A leaking toilet can waste between 300 and 800 gallons of water a day

■ Look for moist areas over and around your water service pipe. Unexplained lush, green areas of your lawn may indicate a leak, as does water pooling on your property.

■ Report running water you see in the street or on right of ways. The Water Task Force and CUC are actively fixing and replacing these problem pipes. You can help by reporting suspected leaks to 235-6090.

■ Report suspected unauthorized water use to 235-6090 and ask for Bruce Megarr, deputy director of Water and Wastewater. ***(PR)***

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IT&E
Life in Motion

Retirees group won't support Jorgensen lawsuit vs Fund

Cites fear of receivership, questionable credibility of lawyer

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Most members of the Commonwealth Retirees Association lack confidence in the case filed by clients of private lawyer Bruce Jorgensen against the Retirement Fund, and would not in any way join or support the lawsuit even if it is fighting for the retirees' money.

This was the consensus during Thursday night's assembly of the group that saw the attendance of over a hundred individuals at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

The members cited fear of having the Fund placed on receivership and what they termed as the "questionable credibility" of Jorgensen himself as reasons for their lack of support for the lawsuit. A few members of the audience, however, came to Jorgensen's defense, saying the lawyer has at least taken the initiative of bringing the case to the federal court.

During his presentation, CRA official Oscar Camacho said the group decided not to support the Jorgensen lawsuit after members found a lot of "ambiguities" in the case.

Camacho said that Jorgensen's intention to have the Fund placed on receivership is sowing fear in the public.

"Yes, we want the government to pay. But the idea of receivership is throwing out fear to the public. Our active employees are very scared and many have already taken out their money because of non-confidence," Camacho told the crowd.

Others in attendance also expressed concerns about Jorgensen's credibility, saying the lawyer, who is based off-island, may only be interested in getting a big slice of the pie as lawyer's fee in the event the government pays its debt to the Fund pursuant to the court judgment. Association members said this is "not acceptable." They cited that the government debt has already been determined by the court and should be paid entirely to the Fund.

The CNMI Superior Court has determined that the central government had incurred a total of $231.6 million in unpaid employer contributions to the Fund since June 2009. That amount jumped to $280 million as of Dec. 31, 2009.

If many CRA members vocally disapproved of Jorgensen's lawsuit, a few individuals in the gallery expressed a different opinion. One of them was former representative Tina Sablan, who recently joined Jorgensen's lawsuit against the Fund.

Other attendees even lauded Jorgensen's efforts to bring the case to federal court, which they said "nobody from the retirees or the public has thought about."

"At least Jorgensen is doing something and is taking the government to the federal court which no one here has taken the initiative," a Jorgensen supporter said.

Through the Jorgensen case, the federal court can implement and make the government pay its debt, which in turn will benefit all retirees, said another attendee.

Jorgensen is representing two alleged retired government employees in suing the CNMI government over the non-payment of their retirement benefits. They later amended their complaint to include Gov. Benigno Fitial and others as defendants in the lawsuit.

The Maryland-based Jorgensen earlier disclosed that he withheld the identities of the plaintiffs due to personal safety and fear of retaliation and persecution.

Last January, the federal court placed under advisement the Fund board of trustees' motion to dismiss a lawsuit filed by these unnamed retirees.

The government's position is that the plaintiffs' motion is not supported by facts and should be dismissed because the complainants used fictitious names, a violation of the Federal Rule of Civil Procedure and the public's common law right to access to court proceedings.

The Fund's counsel earlier described the lawsuit as "a bald attempt to hijack an ongoing lawsuit in the Superior Court for the plaintiffs' own enrichment."

Under the plaintiff's motion, Jorgensen calls for the naming of an emergency receiver pending the appointment of permanent receiver; temporary restraining order with or without notice; issuance of a judgment creditors' bill to reach CNMI property and permitting plaintiffs discovery; and expedited hearing or briefing schedule.

LION 7, THUNDERBOLT 7 OBSERVE TRAINING EXERCISE

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE BASRA, Iraq– The senior NCO in the U.S. Forces Iraq, Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Wilson, "Lion 7," left, was joined Feb. 22 by the senior NCO in the 17th Fires Brigade, Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Santos, "Thunderbolt 7," a native of Saipan, on a visit to Joint Security Station Wessam, in Basra province to observe 17th FiB soldiers train Iraqi soldiers there.

U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SGT. NEIL W. MCCABE

Rotary Club extends Parade of Books deadline

The islands' elementary schools have one more chance to register for the annual Saipan Rotary Club Parade of Books event as the committee extended the deadline to this Friday.

"We are encouraging more schools to register for this once in a year opportunity and really show your creativity and skills as a team as well as letting your students have fun with their imagination," said 2010 Parade of Books coordinator Elly Stoilova.

Up for grabs is a $1,000 cash prize for first place, $750 for second place, $500 for third place, $300 for fourth place, $200 for fifth place and $100 for consolation prizes.

The 6th Annual Parade of Books will be held on March 27, 2010, at 2:00pm at the Marianas High School Gym.

The Saipan Rotary Club is inviting all CNMI elementary schools to enter a team of students who, after reading a book of their choosing, will present a creative performance based on the book to compete for cash prizes.

Pacific Islands Club donated 30 water park passes for Best in Spirit Award and one PIC One Night Stay for Best Director.

Schools who have registered so far are San Vicente, Garapan, Oleai, GTC, Koblerville, Tanapag, Tinian, and Green Meadow elementary schools, and for the first time, Rota and Mount Carmel elementary schools.

The deadline now to register your school's team is on Friday, March 5, 2010. For more information, contact Stoilova at 237-5196 or email at ru@picsaipan.com.

The 2010 Parade of Books is sponsored by Delta Airlines, Kishiwada North Rotary Club, Pacific Islands Club, DFS Galleria, *Marianas Variety News & Views* and Freedom Air. ***(PR)***

DPW readies next phase of Cross Island Road Project

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As soon as Phase 1 of the Cross Island Road Project is completed, the Department of Public Works will immediately proceed with the next phase.

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune*, acting DPW Secretary Martin C. Sablan said Phase 1 is expected to be finished in about 300 days.

"So it's going to be within a year's time or maybe close to a year to complete this particular phase . And then we are going to proceed with Phase 2A," Sablan said.

The federally funded project involves the construction of a new four-lane highway from San Vicente to Capital Hill on Saipan.

Phase 1 has a budget of $9.2 million, 100 percent of it coming from a federal highway grant, according to DPW in an earlier press statement.

Phase 1 will begin from Asin Market in San Vicente to Blue Tank in Papago. The construction began last January.

Under Phase 1, two miles or 15,500 feet of paved highway will be built. The project includes excavation and backfilling, constructing sub-base courses, laying hot asphalt concrete pavement with dense graded anti-skid pavement, pavement markings, shoulders, drainage facilities, and driveway connections. Traffic signal light will also be installed.

Phase 2A will start from Blue Tank to 500 feet away from Mobil Kagman intersection. It will be partly funded by the $4.5 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act or the stimulus funds.

Under Phase 2A, traffic lights will be installed at the Kagman Mobil intersection.

Sablan said Phase 2A is still in the process, but that they don't see any problem with the project.

"[With] Phase 2A…we're still on the planning [stage] as far as project managers and contractors [are concerned]," Sablan said.

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP: RFP10-DPL-064
Submission: March 23, 2010 • Time: 2:00 P.M.

"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL ON SAIPAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS"

Copies of the specifications may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply in Lower Base during regular working hours.

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Mr. Oscar M. Babauta, Acting Secretary, Department of Public Lands by fax to (670) 234-3755, **no later than march 12, 2010, close of business**.

Preference is available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents as per Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118 and must be submitted with the proposal if preference is claimed.

The lessor must comply with Public Law 15-23, Article 5, section 8652 (A) – (D)

/s/ OSCAR M. BABAUTA
Acting Secretary of DPL

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP10: CDD-065
Submission: March 31, 2010 • Time: 2:00 P.M.

"PRIVATIZATION OF CALL-A-RIDE PROGRAM"

The RFP package may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply in Lower Base, Saipan during regular working hours.

Any questions or inquiries for clarification is due no later than the close of business, **March 19, 2010**, and should be directed to **Ms. Pamela C. Sablan, Executive Director at (670) 664-7000 or e-mailed to psablan.cnmicdd@gmail.com.**

This is a federally funded project; as such, local preference is not available, because its use is prohibited by federal law granting funding for this project.

/s/ PAMELA C. SABLAN
Executive Director, CDD

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-RDLNR-048

SUBMISSION: MARCH 16, 2010 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) UTILITY TRACTOR - CIF ROTA FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, ROTA BRANCH"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB IS DUE ON **MARCH 05, 2010, CLOSE OF BUSINESS** AND SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO **MR. JOEY ANTHONEY QUITUGUA**, ACTING RESIDENT DIRECTOR AT TEL (670) 532-9494/5 OR BY FAX TO (670) 532-0520 OR E-MAIL TO **dlnr@pticom.com.**

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **MELCHOR A. MENDIOLA**
MAYOR OF ROTA

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

/s/ **JOEY ANTHONY QUITUGUA**
ACTING RESIDENT DIRECTOR
DLNR, ROTA

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government

INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: ITB10-DPS-062
Submission/Opening Date: March 18, 2010 • Time: 10:00 a.m.

"PURCHASE OF TWO (2) POLICE PACKAGE MOTORCYCLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY-SAIPAN"

Copies of the specifications may be picked up at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

This is a Federally funded project; as such, **local preference is not available**, because its use is prohibited by Federal Law granting funding for this project.

/s/ SANTIAGO F. TUDELA
Commissioner of Public Safety

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government

INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: ITB10-DPS-063
Submission/Opening Date: March 18, 2010 • Time: 10:30 a.m.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) DUI MOBILE TRAILER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY–TINIAN POLICE TRAFFIC SECTION"

Copies of the specifications may be picked up at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

This is a Federally funded project; as such, **local preference is not available**, because its use is prohibited by Federal Law granting funding for this project.

/s/ SANTIAGO F. TUDELA
Commissioner of Public Safety

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

Census Office names winners of student poster contest

A fifth grader at Mount Carmel School, an eighth-grader at Hopwood Junior High School, and an 11th grader at Marianas High School were named Friday the top winners in their respective categories in the 2010 CNMI Census Student Poster Contest.

Brianna C. Hunter of Mount Carmel School won the plum in the contest's Elementary Division, her entry besting 293 other submissions to claim the top spot and winning for herself $200.

Keanah Deleon Guerrero of Hopwood Junior High School placed first in the Middle/Jr. High Division, her entry garnering top scores among 48 total entries. She also got $200 as her prize.

Rozette Bunao of Marianas High School bested 45 other entries to claim the top prize in the High School Division and getting the $200 purse.

Census poster contest winners pose with their parents, school administrators, and acting Gov. Eloy Inos after the awarding ceremony held Friday at the CNMI Local Census Office near the Saipan International Airport.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI Local Census Office announced the poster contest winners Friday at the CNMI Local Census Office near the Saipan International Airport. The event also marked the official opening of the office and was attended by acting Gov. Eloy Inos, Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan, Board of Education vice chair Mary Lou Ada, poster contest winners, principals, teachers, community leaders and Census staff.

There were three categories by grade level. Category 1 is Kindergarten - 6th Grade, Category 2 is 7th - 8th Grade and Category 3 is 9th – 12th Grade. Individual prizes were $200 for first place, $100 for second place and $50 for third place in each category. The schools where each of the first place winners are enrolled were given $500. The posters were judged by staff from the U.S. Census, media, and representatives of community organizations.

There were 388 entries turned in for the contest. The Elementary School division had 294 entries, the Middle School division had 48 entries and the High School Division had 46. All three islands were represented with 23 schools participating and there were entries from every grade K-12. The school with the most entries was Grace Christian Saipan with 98. Hopwood followed with 47 and Garapan Elementary with 43.

The students were asked to design a poster that met the following criteria:

- Poster that describes "What the CNMI Census means to you and your community."
- Highly encouraged to use the Theme: 2010 CNMI Census, It's in Our Hands.
- The use of symbols and CNMI-related themes are encouraged
- Designs can be either hand-drawn or computer generated
- Design must fit on 8.5x11 letter size paper
- Original artwork only, no copyrighted materials

Winning designs will be used by the CNMI Census to promote and highlight the 2010 Census in the CNMI through the media and Census partners. Winning posters will be used in a variety of ways for the awareness campaign, the reminder campaign and the thank you campaign.

The three winners in each category were given their own 12x18 posters as a keepsake. ***(PR)***

WINNERS' LIST

The 2010 Census Student Poster Contest Winners are as follows:

ELEMENTARY DIVISION

1st Place: Brianna C. Hunter—Mount Carmel School—5th grade

2nd Place: Mary Danga—Garapan Elementary School—2nd grade

3rd Place: Lizelle Kathleen C. Lim—Garapan Elementary School—6th grade

MIDDLE/JR. HIGH DIVISION

1st Place: Keanah Deleon Guerrero—Hopwood Junior High School—8th grade

2nd Place: Bertran Franklin DLR Palacios—8th grade

3rd Place: Mary Antonitte Deus Deala—8th grade

HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION

1st Place: Rozette Bunao—Marianas High School—11th grade

2nd Place: Mariefe Carreon—Marianas High School—12th grade

3rd Place: Noreen Palacios Mendiola—Tinian High School – 10th grade

'My Place in the CNMI' photo exhibit opens tomorrow

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Project facilitator Dr. Dirk HR Spennemann, right, works with students from Tinian High School a project workshop. Also pictured is Tinian High School instructor Gina Rankin, second from left.

The public is being invited to attend the opening of a community photographic exhibit at the CNMI Museum of History and Culture on Wednesday, March 3, starting at 6pm.

The exhibit will feature winning images produced by high school students from around the Commonwealth as a part of the "My Place in the CNMI" digital photography project.

This three-week project was sponsored by the NMI Council for the Humanities using funding received from the National Endowment for the Humanities under the "We the People" grant initiative.

As a part of the project, students attended two workshops facilitated by professional photographer Dr. Dirk HR Spennemann.

The first workshop introduced participants to the concepts of community photography and to the principles of composition, lighting, and camera management. The second taught students basic post-processing skills and digital darkroom techniques.

Student photographers produced images under eight thematic categories: self, self-image, family, village, island, the Commonwealth as a whole, the future of the Commonwealth, and art.

Images were scored by a three-judge panel that included Spennemann, artist and Museum executive director Robert Hunter, and professional photographer Dr. Jack Hardy.

First through third place winners in each category will be announced at the exhibit, together with an overall best in exhibit winner. Participants will also be able to vote for a "public choice" winner from among all images.

This event is open to the public and free of charge. Individuals wishing more information are invited to contact Humanities Council staff at 235-4785 or Museum staff at 664-2160.

All images produced by this project will be posted on a special project Web site (http://myplacecnmi.org). This Web site will be online for at least two years and will allow student photographers to share their work with a worldwide audience.

Spennemann is a professor in cultural heritage studies at Charles Sturt University in Albury, Australia. He is also a photographic artist with several exhibitions in museums and galleries in Australia, the CNMI, and Alaska. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation for Bid
PSS IFB 10-008

"Public Sale of Used Electrical Materials on Tinian"

The CNMI Public School System is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the "Sale of Used Electrical Equipment such as Transformers, Meter Boxes, Copper Wire and High Tension Wire". PSS no longer needs equipment following the completion of an Electrical Upgrade Project on the grounds of Tinian Jr/Sr. High School.

A listing of Equipment for sale may be obtained by calling the PSS Procurement Property & Inventory Control Officer Alkantro Sarapio, PSS Property & Inventory Control Officer on 237.3068 or 483.9118. Prospective Buyers may also contact Mr. Sarapio to arrange for an inspection of the equipment on Tinian.

Bidders may bid on some, or all, items. Bids should be placed in a sealed envelope marked **"PSS IFB 10-008"** containing one (1) original and two (2) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building no later than March 10, 2010 at 10:30 AM.

/s/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/s/ Robert Florian
P&S Officer

Some scientists defend tsunami warnings

HONOLULU (AP)—The warning was ominous, its predictions dire: Oceanographers issued a bulletin telling Hawaii and other Pacific islands that a killer wave was heading their way with terrifying force and that "urgent action should be taken to protect lives and property."

But the devastating tidal surge predicted after Chile's magnitude 8.8-earthquake for areas far from the epicenter never materialized. And by Sunday, authorities had lifted the warning after waves half the predicted size tickled the shores of Hawaii and tourists once again jammed beaches and restaurants.

Scientists acknowledged they overstated the threat but many defended their actions, saying they took the proper steps and learned the lessons of the 2004 Indonesian tsunami that killed thousands of people who didn't get enough warning.

"It's a key point to remember that we cannot under-warn. Failure to warn is not an option for us," said Dai Lin Wang, an oceanographer at the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii. "We cannot have a situation that we thought was no problem and then it's devastating. That just cannot happen."

AP

Local residents in Shichigahama, Miyagi Prefecture (state), northern Japan, look at a wave washing stairs built on the shore at a fishing port Sunday, Feb. 28, 2010.

Hundreds of thousands of people fled shorelines for higher ground Saturday in a panic that circled the Pacific Rim after scientists warned 53 nations and territories that a tsunami had been generated by the massive Chilean quake.

It was the largest-scale evacuation in Hawaii in years, if not decades. Emergency sirens blared throughout the day, the Navy moved ships out of Pearl Harbor, and residents hoarded gasoline, food and water in anticipation of a major disaster. Some supermarkets even placed limits on items like Spam because of the panic buying.

At least five people were killed by the tsunami on Robinson Crusoe Island off Chile's coast and huge waves devastated the port city of Talcahuano, near hard-hit Concepcion on Chile's mainland.

But the threat of monster waves that left Hawaii's sun-drenched beaches empty for hours never appeared—a stark contrast to the tidal surge that killed 230,000 people around the Indian Ocean in 2004 and flattened entire communities.

This time, waves of more than 5 feet were reported in Kahului Bay in Maui and in Hilo, on the eastern coast of Hawaii's Big Island, but did little damage. Predictions of wave height in some areas were off by as much as 50 percent.

In Tonga, where up to 50,000 people fled inland hours ahead of the tsunami, the National Disaster Office had reports of a wave up to 6.5 feet hitting a small northern island, with no indications of damage.

And in Japan, where authorities ordered 400,000 people out of coastal communities, the biggest wave was a 4-foot surge that hit the northern island of Hokkaido, flooding some piers.

$3.5M Navy contract awarded to Hub Zone-certified small business

U.S. Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas awarded a $3.5 million contract Feb. 12 to Fargo Pacific, Inc., a Hub Zone-certified Guam business, to construct a training facility for the Air Force.

Commando Warrior Operations Facility will be a single-story building designed to complement mission critical capabilities of the Commando Warrior Flight, and is another step toward the completion of the Pacific Regional Training Center at Northwest Field, Andersen Air Force Base.

"The new facility frees up critical classroom space for our Electronic Security Systems and Antiterrorism/Force Protection Level II courses. It also provides a space for ground combat skills headquarters track students to conduct planning operations for the field training exercises," said Maj. Kirk Hughes, commander of the 736th Security Forces Squadron. Hughes said the building will add much needed office space for the instructor personnel assigned to Commando Warrior.

Commando Warrior is an 18-day pre-deployment training course for U.S. Pacific Air Force's security forces airmen hosted by the 736th SFS.

"This contract award to a Hub-Zone certified Guam-based company continues to demonstrate our commitment to our local small business community," said Cmdr. Matt Suess, NAVFAC Marianas executive officer. "It further demonstrates the military's commitment to the island of Guam," Suess said.

The project is expected to be complete in August 2011. The exact amount of the contract award is $3,490,000, and is one of several task orders issued against the Hub Zone design-build multiple award construction contract awarded in June 2009. ***(USN)***

PACIFIC BRIEFS

A. Samoa police abuse government vehicles

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (Samoa News/PIR)—Police Commissioner Tuaolo M. Fruean on Wednesday told a Senate panel of his disappointment and what a headache it is for the Department of Public Safety having to deal with the abuse of government vehicles by the American Samoa Government employees. Tuaolo said there is widespread abuse of government cars and urged lawmakers to set by law the time that vehicles are allowed to be used outside of working hours, with violators sent to court to deal with their misuse of government property. The Police Commissioner was called to testify on a Senate bill that among other things, creates an oversight board for regulating government vehicle use and establishing licensing and registration procedures. The bill is an effort to halt the abuse of government vehicles.

Fiji minimum wage increase due in July

SUVA, Fiji (Fijilive/PIR)—The chairman of Fiji's Wages Council Father Kevin Barr is expecting a wage increase in mid 2010. Speaking to FijiLive, Fr. Barr said all the wages councils met and resolved that there be an increase from July 1. "We are trying to be fair to the employers but at the same time, we want to be just to the workers," he said. He highlighted that according to the current poverty line, the minimum wage rate has to be FJ$175 [US$90] per week. "It's a disgrace that 60 percent of workers covered by the wages council are earning below that," Father Barr said. "With the 20 percent devaluation that took place last year, the purchasing power went down as well." He added the People's Charter for Change stated the need for a National Minimum wage in accordance to the poverty line. "Our job is to see workers get a gradual increase until the National Minimum income comes into effect," he said.

Nauru voters reject constitutional proposals

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—The people of Nauru have voted against the proposed amendments to their constitution. The government says nearly three thousand votes out of the almost 4,400 cast, opposed the 34 proposed changes. Seventy-eight percent of the voters on the electoral roll turned out to vote in the referendum. Two-thirds of votes cast at the referendum were required to approve the Bill. Instead, two thirds of the voting public chose the "No" option. As in a general election, polling booths were stationed in all 14 districts around the island, The Supreme law of Nauru was written before independence in 1968 and a process of constitutional reform began six years ago. Advocates say the proposed changes to the Constitution were designed to improve the transparency and accountability of public institutions, and to make the Constitution more relevant to the Nauruan people.

A. Samoa governor asks U.S. for budget increase

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (Samoa News/PIR)—American Samoa Governor Togiola Tulafono on Wednesday testified before the U.S. Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife on the Office of Insular Affairs' fiscal year 2011 budget submitted by U.S. President Barack Obama. The Governor noted of the US$228 million annual budget for local government operations, including judiciary that the American Samoa Government does not have sufficient local revenues to fund the entire operating costs of government. He said American Samoa's operations appropriation is the same each year; hence the American Samoa Government must absorb the costs of inflation or costs associated with the growing population. "As a result, American Samoa assumes an increasing percentage of the total costs of government operations each year," according to a copy of the Governor's written testimony presented to the subcommittee.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 2, 1999

CDA opposes govt guarantee for project

The Commonwealth Development Authority has strongly opposed a proposed legislation that seeks to require the government to issue a guaranty for the construction of the 80-megawatt power plant on Saipan in fear it would violate procurement regulations and constrain the utilities corporation from undertaking a similar project in the future. In a Senate bill extending full support to a conglomerate chosen by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation to build the $120 million power project, CNMI will assume all financial liabilities of CUC should the latter fail to meet its obligation under an independent power purchase agreement. While CDA says it supports the passage of the proposal to fast track the power plant expansion program, it is apprehensive on the impact of provisions that would seek a 25-year full faith and credit backing from the island government.

Report details NMC fund mismanagement

Several policies implemented by the Northern Marianas College have led to the serious financial crisis besetting CNMI's lone higher learning institution, according to an in-house committee report that drew tepid response from officials despite sounding an alarm on the problem. But the findings made on the critical report ended up boosting charges of mismanagement of the state college by the House committee on Health, Education and Welfare which resumed its oversight hearing on NMC yesterday. HEW chair Rep. Heinz Hofschneider called on the college to reform its system to prevent what he claimed an appalling pattern that has allowed NMC to overspend beyond its appropriated budget and incur deficit in the past few years.

March. 2, 2000

Teno asked to veto bill restoring 80MW project

Another bidder on the 80-megawatt power plant has joined the fray in protesting government actions on the controversial project, urging Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to veto pending legislation it said will favor only one of the competing firms. Saipan Power Partners warned that signing into law Senate Bill 12-19 would eliminate competition and allow awarding of the $120 million contract to Enron despite what it claimed as the latter's "more costly" proposal. The measure, offered by Senate Floor Leader Pete P. Reyes, cleared the House of Representatives last Friday and now heads to the governor for consideration.

CPA faces $1M civil suit from employee

An employee of the Commonwealth Ports Authority has accused the government agency of discrimination and harassment in a civil suit filed before the U.S. District Court that is seeking more than $1 million in moral and punitive damages. Rudy C. Aguon, of Koblerville and an accounts clerk, sued several CPA officials, including Executive Director Carlos H. Salas and Saipan Port Manager Antonio B. Cabrera, for alleged violation of his employment as well as civil and human rights. In the suit filed the other day, the plaintiff claimed these officials retaliated after he lodged a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission charging CPA of violations of federal and CNMI laws regarding his employment with the agency.

March. 2, 2001

Police warn vs investment scam

Local law enforcement officials are on top of an extensive intelligence operation that investigates the involvement of CNMI-based individuals in an investment scam that has reportedly ripped-off hundreds of their hard-earned dollars. Police Commissioner Charles W. Ingram Jr. said that a number of CNMI residents have reportedly established links with Prosperity.com, an Internet-based business believed to be a promoter of the pyramiding scheme. The Philippines-based online firm reportedly lures clients for investment opportunities with the promise that it would translate to a lump sum profit for the investors.

OPA may cut nonresident staff

The Senate and Office of the Public Auditor have apparently found a compromise on the proposed extension of the "sunset" clause of a public law that requires government agencies to trim down nonresident staff. The middle ground would allow the OPA to keep its nonresident workers, albeit reduced in number. The figure arrived at would just be enough to effectively train new local hires and interns. "We obviously cannot train interns with interns, Public Auditor Mike Sablan said. "The success of the OPA hinges in maintaining an experienced staff. If not, it would be ideal to retain a transition team to help the OPA train new hires and interns."

US territories seek equality in healthcare reform bill

CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho, Puerto Rico Gov. Luis Fortuño, and U.S Virgin Islands Gov. John P. deJongh, Jr. have sent a joint letter urging Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) to support quality healthcare for citizens in the U.S territories as President Barrack Obama's proposal does not adequately provide equal healthcare opportunities for the territories.

In the joint letter the governors wrote, "The Presidents proposal fails to reflect compromise provisions that the territories agreed to with the Administration, House and Senate negotiators earlier this year. It also fails to reflect the commitment made by the President-elect Obama to support a phase-in of equal treatment for the territories in federal healthcare policy..."

To further push for inclusion of the U.S territories into the healthcare reform bill the governors also asked Reid to support the House provisions as discussions of the bill are underway.

"On behalf of our citizens, who freely risk their lives to defend our democracy but lack a vote to determine its policies, we strongly urge you to support the House provisions for the territories in any reconciliation or other legislative procedure used to implement comprehensive healthcare reform," the governors said.

The House measure calls for $10.35 billon over nine years to expand the heavily restricted Medicaid programs in the territories. The bill also includes $4 billion for the territories to assist the uninsured earning above the low insular Medicaid income thresholds. The House version contains provisions for Virgin Islanders, as well as for residents of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

In addition to this effort, territorial leaders sent a joint letter to House and Senate leaders last month asking them to consider the citizens of the U.S territories in the healthcare reform bill. ***(PR)***

Guam's Camacho presses Interior chief for high level support of Guam buildup

GOLDEN, Colorado—Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho on Friday met with Interior Secretary Ken Salazar in Washington, D.C., to conclude a week of meetings centered on military expansion in the Western Pacific and efforts to expand renewable energy in Guam.

Camacho said that Salazar committed his agency's senior leadership to ensure the Guam military buildup program moves ahead with the full interests of the people of Guam at the forefront.

"I am pleased that Secretary Salazar has committed to engaging his senior staff in this critical issue," said Camacho. "My Administration will continue to stand firm in requiring that the mitigation of all impacts related to the buildup be addressed."

Camacho said that Salazar shared his agency's disappointment on the recent lack of a TIGER Grant Award from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Salazar pressed Deputy Secretary David J. Hayes; Chief of Staff and Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Tom Strickland; and Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta, to work closely with the Economic Adjustment Committee to address the local government's needs related to the Guam buildup.

"What I received is a commitment of high level coordination," said Camacho. "DOI has a sense of what the United States must do to implement this national priority and, in the coming months, will work closely with the government of Guahan to ensure this buildup benefits our people."

This week, Camacho will attend meetings with American Samoa Gov. Togiola Tulafono and CNMI Gov. Benigno Fitial at the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory to discuss ways to improve energy efficiency and increase renewable energy technologies in the islands. The three-day event, to be attended by senior Obama administration officials and Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter, will touch on a host of issues including the integrated deployment of renewable energy solutions to the islands, strategic energy planning, and sharing results of Pacific Island Resource Assessments completed by NREL and DOI.

Additionally, the governors will be briefed on a recent agreement between the U.S. Virgin Islands and the U.S. Department of Energy regarding a pilot program that seeks to bring renewable energy to islands around the world.

"This agreement sets out to have 60 percent of the territory's energy come from renewable resources by 2025," said Camacho. "We hope to have both the Consolidated Commission on Utilities and the University of Guam to engage in this effort to help our island find solutions to stabilize energy prices, protect our environment and create green jobs." ***(PR)***

Students from the Northern Marianas College Nursing School provided free blood pressure checkup and blood sugar testing at the NMC campus facility late last year.
NMC

NMC features its first health awareness fair

The Northern Marianas College is inviting the public to its first Health Awareness Fair at the NMC As Terlaje campus.

The fair is co-sponsored by Bridge Capital, LLC and organized by the Northern Marianas College Nursing Club, the Division of Public Health, NMC CREES, College Access Challenge Project, the Associated Students of NMC, and the Office of Student Activities and Leadership at NMC.

The fair will feature many useful resources that aim to elevate health awareness and best practices. Some of these feature free blood pressure and blood sugar checkups, body mass index checkups, cholesterol testing, free H1N1 and flu shots, family planning and counseling, breast and cervical screening, and a booth for the Women, Infant and Children's program.

Among other health care-related activities and informational booths, the Health Awareness Fair will feature fun activities and entertainment such as the Northern Marianas College Battle of the PROAs competition.

The fair will be held on March 6, 2010, at the NMC Field from 8am to 12pm. There is no fee to attend the fair.

For more information call the office of ASNMC at 234-5498 Ext. 1521. ***(NMC)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 13th birthday to our dear daughter, Angelica Mateo, who celebrated her special day on March 1, 2010. Greetings come from Mom and Dad.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NEW CHRISTIAN

Christening of Nazareno Aguon Borja, Jr. on Feb. 28, 2010, shown here with his parents Nazario Borja and Patricia Aguon of San Jose Village, Tinian.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Can you identify

THE NMI Council for the Humanities, in collaboration with the *Saipan Tribune*, is running a series of photographs in this section every Tuesday and is inviting the public to identify the persons or places featured in this section.

If you can identify the persons or places in the picture, please contact the NMI Council for the Humanities by telephone (235-4785), via email (photo@nmihumanities.org) or by visiting the Council's office located in Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai. These images are from the Council's Historic Photograph Database which is currently being developed to help document the history and cultures of the CNMI.

The person featured in last week's photo has been identified as Caridad Taitano Camacho. She was identified by Eileen Pellegrino, Allie Sablan, and Ben Taitano.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

A natural choice

In America's climate debate, one of the most promising developments of recent months has been the growing recognition in Washington that natural gas may play a key role in curbing carbon emissions. The resurgence of gas comes through the discovery of massive deposits in Appalachian shale formations and elsewhere—a reserve that offers the prospect of stable domestic supplies and relatively low prices. Since burning natural gas produces half the emissions of burning coal, switching the two fuels could put a significant dent in America's carbon footprint.

The rumor this month was that such arguments had swayed the White House and that President Obama would back policy aimed at discouraging coal and encouraging natural gas at a speech he delivered to the Business Roundtable on Wednesday. The rumors didn't bear out. That's too bad. With climate-change legislation still stalled in Congress, nudging gas forward is something that the government can do quickly and relatively cheaply to meet its medium-term emissions goals if current trends persist.

To be sure, America doesn't want to depend too much on one commodity. Drastically ramping up the amount of natural gas burned to generate electricity would require infrastructure investments in certain regions as well as retrofits of certain plants or the construction of entirely new ones.

But existing gas-fired plants are running at only about 25 percent capacity, in part because many are switched on only when demand spikes. The Congressional Research Service reports that doubling the use of existing plants could replace about a third of coal-fired power, getting America a third of the way to its goal for 2020. For reasons of infrastructure, that might be too optimistic a scenario. But BP—which has a stake in natural gas—estimates that retiring the 80 dirtiest coal plants and replacing them with gas-fired power would get America 10 percent of the way to its 2020 emissions target and increase domestic gas consumption by only 5 percent.

Even if you don't trust BP's numbers, a range of attractive policy options is available, starting with tax incentives to decommission old coal plants. Natural gas is so competitive, it might not take much more than that. However, policy-makers might also consider coupling that with some carrot to switch to gas. States that demand that utilities derive a certain portion of their electricity from clean sources could also allow natural gas to count in such requirements, discounting for the carbon emissions it does produce. Federal legislators contemplating a similar, national standard might also consider this.

In the long term, natural gas is only a bridge fuel as America weans itself off carbon, since it still produces plenty of emissions. With a rising carbon price, natural gas will become too expensive to burn. But it can provide the country some time to bring to market the cleaner technologies on which America eventually must run.

(c) 2010, The Washington Post

Lab rats with cellphones?

By CHRISTOPHER KETCHAM
LOS ANGELES TIMES

We love our digital gadgets—"magic" devices that define cool and promise to remake our lives for the better. But there is growing evidence of a dark side to the techno-magic. Your cellphone, and any other wireless device that depends on electromagnetic (EM) microwave radiation to function, may be hazardous to your health.

Most of the bad news comes from major labs and research institutions in Europe. What they're reporting is that using cellphones and Wi-Fi transmitters—which operate using similar frequencies—can have biological effects on the brain and body.

The scientific debate remains heated and far from resolved, as the Health section in the Los Angeles Times reported last week. But the research to date suggests a number of chilling possibilities as to what EM radiation may be doing to us.

For example, in 2008, neuroscientists at Swinburne University of Technology in Australia strapped Nokia phones to subjects' heads, then turned the phones on and off. On—the brain's alpha waves spiked. Off—the brain settled. The researchers speculated that the effect was the result of the brain "concentrating to overcome the electrical interference in brain circuits caused by the pulsed microwave radiation."

Swedish neuro-oncologist Leif Salford, chairman of the department of neurosurgery at Lund University, has found that cellphone radiation kills brain cells in rats, especially those cells associated with memory and learning. The damage occurred after an exposure of just two hours. In duplicating earlier research, Salford also found that cellphone microwaves produce holes in the barrier between the circulatory system and the brain in rats. One potential outcome, according to Salford, is dementia.

Meanwhile, Austrian researchers reported in 2004 that cellphone radiation can induce double-strand breaks in DNA, one of the undisputed causes of cancer.

So why isn't this a bigger issue in the United States? Partly because there are countervailing studies and other scientists telling us not to be worried, that the risks are low or that we just don't know enough to say that the risks are real.

Consider the biggest study being done on the question of whether cellphones cause cancers of the brain, mouth and ear—the 13-country Interphone study conducted under the auspices of the International Agency for Research on Cancer in France. The study's epidemiologists have looked at cancer patients and worked backward to establish cellphone habits.

The study, alas, has been fraught with controversy. The multinational researchers—U.S. scientists conspicuously not among them—have fallen into warring camps, and the full study has not been released.

However, pieces of the study have been made public. One Interphone study, for example, found that after a decade of cellphone use, the chance of getting a brain tumor goes up as much as 40 percent for adults. Another Interphone study reported a nearly 300 percent increased risk of acoustic neuroma, a tumor of the acoustic nerve. But still other Interphone researchers say their data show no increase in brain tumors—or any tumor—caused by cellphone use.

The cellphone industry lobby, CTIA—the Wireless Association, recently said in a statement that "peer-reviewed scientific evidence has overwhelmingly indicated that wireless devices do not pose a public health risk." Meanwhile, watchdog groups keep it vague. "The available science," says

See LAB on Page 11

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The big decision in May

IMMIGRATION FORUM

By MAYA KARA and BRUCE MAILMAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Maya Kara is a native of Hungary and comes to the practice of law by way of her interest in Asian history. Bruce Mailman is a native of Bakersfield, California and was a private investigator in California prior to becoming a lawyer. Both have lived and practiced law in the CNMI for over 20 years, Maya in government service and Bruce in private practice. They are married and are partners in the law firm of Mailman & Kara, LLC in Garapan, Saipan.

In our first column in the *Marianas Variety* in the first week of July 2009, we talked about rumors and the insidious effect they can have on people's decision making. If you believe a rumor, which is unfounded or untrue, and you rely on it to make your decisions, you will make poor decisions. Poor decisions can have very serious negative consequences for you and your family. Therefore it is very important to check out the accuracy of rumors. There is an American saying that if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is (too good to be true).

Last week we discussed the false rumor that has been frightening non-U.S. citizen mothers away from the WIC nutrition program. The latest fantasy we have been hearing, over and over, goes something like this: "I don't have to worry or do anything about my immigration status because of the Big Decision Coming in May." The "Big Decision in May" rumor appears to be based on a report to Congress, due in May 2010, that supposedly will bestow green cards on long term foreign workers in the CNMI. In today's column, we will examine this rumor.

As with most rumors, there is a small kernel of truth. The Consolidated Natural Resources Act (CNRA), Public Law 110-229, does mandate that the Secretary of Interior make a report to Congress on the advisability of extending immigration benefits to CNMI foreign workers. The actual language of the law, at Section 702(a)(h), is as follows:

(h) Report on Nonresident Guestworker Population—The Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Governor of the Commonwealth, shall report to the Congress not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008. The report shall include--

(1) the number of aliens residing in the Commonwealth;

(2) a description of the legal status (under Federal law) of such aliens;

(3) the number of years each alien has been residing in the Commonwealth;

(4) the current and future requirements of the Commonwealth economy for an alien workforce; and

(5) such recommendations to the Congress, as the Secretary may deem appropriate, related to whether or not the Congress should consider permitting lawfully admitted guest workers lawfully residing in the Commonwealth on such enactment date to apply for long-term status under the immigration and nationality laws of the United States.

Let us look at the components required by this report:

1 Not later than two years after the enactment of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008:

The CNRA was signed by President Bush on May 8, 2008. Two years after that is May 8, 2010. The report is therefore due on or before that date.

2 The number of aliens residing in the Commonwealth:

The truth is, no one knows. The last official census was in 1990. The next one is gearing up and the numbers are not likely to be available until at least March 2011. CNMI Department of Labor is in control of the LIIDS system, a database of the presence and employment of aliens in the CNMI. We do not believe that LIIDS data has been made available to the federal government. There have been serious questions in the past of the accuracy of LIIDS data to track illegal aliens. The federal Ombudsman conducted a registration of aliens in the CNMI recently. However, since participation was voluntary and conducted over a very brief period, the accuracy of the numbers is uncertain.

3 A description of the legal status (under Federal law) of such aliens:

Same answer as No. 1: we don't know. No survey regarding this issue has been taken by either federal or local authorities. We are certain that USCIS knows how many green cards have been issued since November 28, 2009, and even prior to that date, but that is a very partial answer. USCIS has no data on the number of foreign workers under CNMI work authorizations. CNMI government knows the number of umbrella permits it issued, but it is not sharing that information. We believe the Ombudsman's survey made this inquiry, but again, this information is uncertain because of the less than complete level of participation.

4 The number of years each alien has been residing in the Commonwealth:

Same answer as to Nos. 1 and 2. We simply don't know. This type of statistical data has never been reliably gathered in the Commonwealth.

5 The current and future requirements of the Commonwealth economy for an alien workforce:

Again, same answer as to Nos. 1, 2 and 3. This requires statistics (that we don't have) and a complex analysis using economic models; even then the results are projections based on certain assumptions; projections are only as accurate as the underlying assumptions. The Government Accountability Office sent a couple of staffers to the CNMI last month to gather information; they cannot, however, gather statistics that do not exist. The GAO is also required to submit a report to Congress at the same time as Interior, on the economic effects of CRNA on the Commonwealth. GAO is the investigative arm of Congress and prides itself on being "the congressional watchdog." GAO does careful analytical work. Inevitably, due to the lack of statistical data, any report GAO publishes will be hedged with disclaimers. It is unlikely to give us the solid support we need. The continuing availability of foreign labor is the single most critical factor in the economic future of the Commonwealth. It cannot be taken lightly. It should not be based on guesswork.

Now remember, a report to the U.S. Congress is a fairly big deal. The person presenting this report will be the Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, a member of the President's Cabinet and a political appointee. Cabinet secretaries do not like to make mistakes; it is politically embarrassing to the President, and causing embarrassment to the President can rapidly undermine a promising political career. So Secretary Salazar will be very careful not to have anything in this report that is inaccurate. He is also very unlikely to make any recommendations that are not supported by statistical data. Due to the lack of statistical data, it is very unlikely that Secretary Salazar will be able to report any accurate demographic information required by the report or to make any precise recommendations based upon it. He will be able to report the lack of data, the need for data, and make a recommendation to revisit the issue at some future time when data might be available. It is very unlikely at this time that he will make any recommendation to Congress regarding the future immigration status of CNMI guest workers.

Based on our assessment, a positive recommendation to extend special immigration benefits to CNMI guest workers is very unlikely to come this May. The "Big Decision in May" will likely call for further study and delay on the issue. In the unlikely event that a positive recommendation is made, the recommendation will still need to weather the political storm raging in the United States regarding immigration reform and the future of approximately 12 million illegal aliens.

We all know that the great majority of our foreign workers entered the CNMI legally, and that they did not even try to enter the U.S.; the U.S. borders simply rolled over them, swallowed them up. Unfortunately, that critical but fine distinction will escape most of the U.S. politicians on whom we will need to rely enact an amendment to the CRNA; they will not understand that the vast majority of aliens in the CNMI are here lawfully. Any request for enhanced status for CNMI guest workers will need to confront and overcome the political hostility against illegal aliens existing in the U.S. Like it or not, the future of guest workers in the CNMI is tied to the future of illegal aliens in the U.S.

In the meantime, the clock is running on the remnants of the CNMI permitting system, which will end Nov. 27, 2011. So will the umbrella permit system, which provided a reprieve for many foreign national workers, investors and other CNMI immigration permittees. Those CNMI aliens who qualify for some form of U.S. visa but have put off that application, in the hope that some version of "The Big Decision in May" will save them, have been lucky so far. First, the June 1, 2009, transition date was delayed to Nov. 28. Then, at practically the last minute, the CNMI devised the umbrella permit system, which USCIS accepted. But at some point the procrastinators are going to run out of time to make those crucial applications. All aliens present in the CNMI will need to obtain some form of U.S. immigration status by Nov. 27, 2011—or face removal by U.S. authorities.

We wish it were otherwise.

The information contained in this column is intended as general information only, and not as individual legal advice. Readers should obtain professional legal advice before taking action with respect to their individual situations. Readers may submit questions regarding federalization or immigration issues to the authors by email to lex-marianas@pticom.com. Readers may also e-mail written questions through the Saipan Tribune at editor@saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

Late Thursday night the power line running to my house caught fire. First sparks, then flames, then exploding sounds, then the power went out, and then the power went on again. My family, our dogs, my kids' friends were all freaking out. So I called CUC's trouble desk. I expected that CUC would slowly arrive, that they would just turn off the power, and that it would then be several days without power before anything got fixed. I was wrong. It was almost the middle of the night, but CUC (Mike and Ben) was at my house within the hour. Mike and Ben immediately recognized the problem and went to work fixing it. They got the materials, manpower, and trucks there quickly and within a couple of hours the line was replaced and my family could safely go to bed.

Thank you CUC for being so impressive and for dealing with a dangerous situation so professionally. My family and I really appreciate the job you did.

F. Mathew Smith
Talafofo, Saipan

LAB

From Page 10

the Food and Drug Administration, "does not allow us to conclude that mobile phones are absolutely safe, or that they are unsafe."

So whom to believe, and what to do?

First, consider research done by Henry Lai, a biologist at the University of Washington: Only 25 percent of studies funded by the wireless industry show some type of biological effect from microwave radiation. Independently funded studies, however, are far more damning: 75 percent of those studies—free of industry influence—show a bioeffect. Some 30 percent of funding for the Interphone research was provided by industry, which critics say has resulted in a favorable skewing of some Interphone data.

Obviously, we need to demand more independent research into microwave radiation. In the meantime, we should also treat cellphones and other wireless gadgets with less adoration and more suspicion, and as individuals we may want to follow the lead of many nations and regulate the way we use them for ourselves.

For example, Belgium, France, Finland, Germany, Russia and Israel have publicly discouraged use of cellphones by children. (Independent research in Sweden last year concluded there was an astonishing 420 percent increased chance of getting brain cancer for cellphone users who were teenagers or younger when they first started using their phones.) France has gone so far as to issue a generalized national cellphone health warning, banned cellphones in elementary schools and considered outlawing marketing the phones to children.

The personal equivalent? For starters, don't get rid of your land line. Buy a hands-free device; keep your cellphone away from your head, face and neck. Don't carry it in your pocket for hours on end (there's some evidence cellphones aren't good for your sperm count).

Salford, the neuro-oncologist, has called the unregulated use of cellphones by 4.5 billion people worldwide "the largest human biological experiment ever." It's only common sense to do what you can to take yourself out of the guinea pig pool.

Christopher Ketcham is the author of Warning: Your Cell Phone May Be Hazardous to Your Health *in February's* GQ. *He wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

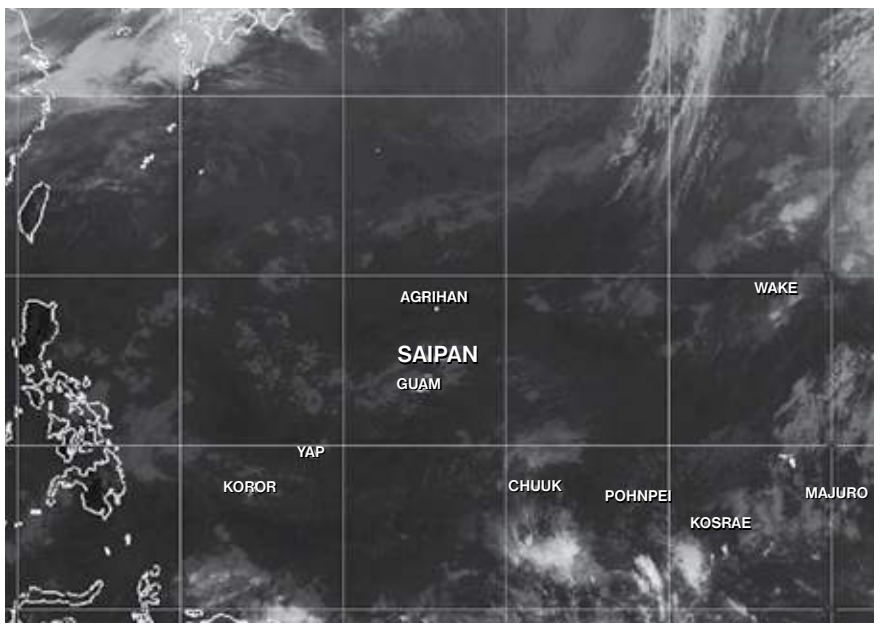
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲83	▼74
Palau	Sunny	▲89	▼76
Yap	Sunny	▲87	▼76
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼76
Kosrae	Sunny	▲87	▼75
Majuro	Cloudy	▲85	▼78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲72	▼61
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲45	▼25
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲79	▼72
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲76	▼69
London	Cloudy	▲48	▼40
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲66	▼52
Manila	Sunny	▲92	▼74
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲73	▼57
Miami	Thunderstorms	▲79	▼51
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲46	▼33
Osaka	Cloudy	▲54	▼43
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲45	▼35
Pusan	Dreary	▲60	▼33
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲60	▼42
Salem	Rain	▲55	▼38
San Francisco	Rain	▲61	▼49
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲39	▼25
Tokyo	Rain	▲50	▼46
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲44	▼33

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N151E to 23N143E then continues as a shear line to end near 22N135E. Patchy clouds and scattered light showers are along and up to 125 miles north of this boundary. A surface trough extends northeastward from 15N160E to near 25N168E. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are north of a line from 22N166E to 17N180 to beyond 25N and scattered showers are just south of Wake Island within 50 miles of a line from 17N166E to 18N167E. The remnants of a shear line are triggering scattered showers just north of Chuuk within 75 miles of a line from 9N151E to 9N154E. Trade-wind convergence is causing scattered showers well south of Palau to the south of a line from 3N131E to EQ139E and south of Chuuk within 75 miles of a line from 3N153E to 1N156E and south of Pohnpei and Kosrae between the equator and 3N from 158E to 163E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:43 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
8:52 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet
3:12 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
9:02 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:34 AM	6:25 PM
Wednesday	6:33 AM	6:25 PM
Thursday	6:33 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:32 AM	6:25 PM
Saturday	6:31 AM	6:26 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:58 PM	7:19 AM
Wednesday	8:57 PM	8:04 AM
Thursday	9:56 PM	8:49 AM
Friday	10:54 PM	9:37 AM
Saturday	11:51 PM	10:26 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

DL638	8:00am	10:55am	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	5:50am	8:40am	Daily
DL638/288	8:00am	1:30pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL297	4:35pm	7:30pm	Daily
DL289	4:50pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
OZ606/703	3:20pm	10:55pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

DL639	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily Ops 5min later eff Mar 1

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL290	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
DL298	10:15am	2:45pm	Daily
DL287/639	5:50pm	1:30am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL288	9:00pm	1:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Business

Toyota chief visits China amid recall woes

BEIJING (AP)—Toyota President Akio Toyoda's visit to China to talk about his company's quality problems reflects the fast-growing Chinese market's importance to automakers as they struggle with weak global sales.

Toyoda is due to speak at a news conference Monday evening in Beijing in his second foreign appearance following last week's visit to Washington, the company said. Japanese news reports said he would meet with Chinese officials.

"The fact that he is going to China second, after the United States, tells you the importance they place on China relative to other markets," said John Bonnell, a J.D. Power analyst. "Toyota wants to make sure it puts its best foot forward, not only with its best products but in instilling confidence."

The number of Toyota vehicles being recalled in China is small compared with the 8.5 million vehicles recalled worldwide since October for sticky gas pedals, faulty floor mats and glitches in braking software.

Automakers are looking to China for sales at a time of sluggish global demand and as a major driver of the industry's future growth. China overtook the United States as the biggest auto market last year with a 48 percent jump in sales, driven by government tax cuts and subsidies to buyers.

AP
In this Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010 file photo, the Toyota logo is shown at a dealership in North Palm Beach, Fla.

China could be critical to Toyota as quality worries batter sales elsewhere, said Zhang Xin, an industry analyst for Guotai Junan Securities in Beijing.

"It's very important. Toyota in the North American market was almost finished in the short-term, so it has to secure its Asian market. Its biggest market in Asia is China," Zhang said. "It must focus on this."

China's state-controlled media have made only muted comment on the recalls, in contrast to the United States, where Toyoda faced blistering criticism from American lawmakers.

"I think he is also coming to say, 'Thanks.' The U.S. side continues to put him under great pressure, but China doesn't," said Rao Da, general secretary of the China Passenger Car Association, an industry group.

The flood of recalls in the United States has shaken confidence in Toyota's reputation for excellent quality. In China, the company announced a recall of 75,552 RAV4 sport-utility vehicles in late January due to the gas pedal problem.

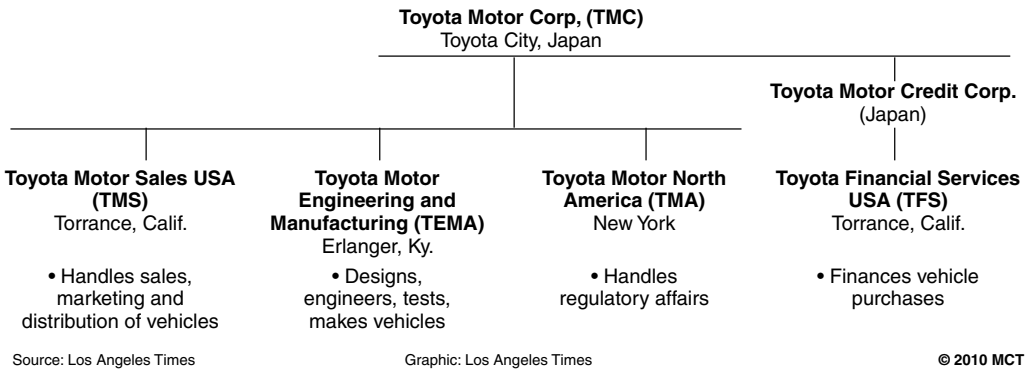
Financial analysts say Toyota's China sales fell in January compared with December, but it was unclear whether that was linked to the recalls. Spending on many goods sees a lull in January and February due to the weeklong Lunar New Year holiday, and auto sales growth this year is expected to slow after 2009's surge.

The state-sanctioned industry group, the China Association of Auto Manufacturers, said Toyota's China sales in January fell 16 percent from December, according to Zhang. The CAAM refused to release its data, which it said are given only to paying customers.

Decision-making maze

TOYOTA

The complexity of Toyota's organizational structure in the U.S. has complicated the automaker's handling of the sudden-acceleration problem.



Source: Los Angeles Times Graphic: Los Angeles Times © 2010 MCT

White House: Simple up-or-down vote on health care

WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House called for a "simple up-or-down" vote on health care legislation Sunday as Speaker Nancy Pelosi appealed to House Democrats to get behind President Barack Obama's chief domestic priority even it if threatens their political careers.

In voicing support for a simple majority vote, White House health reform director Nancy-Ann DeParle signaled Obama's intention to push the Democratic-crafted bill under Senate rules that would overcome GOP stalling tactics.

Republicans unanimously oppose the Democratic proposals. Without GOP support, Obama's only chance of emerging with a policy and political victory is to bypass the bipartisanship he promoted during his televised seven-hour health care summit Thursday.

"We're not talking about changing any rules here," DeParle said. "All the president's talking about is: Do we need to address this problem and does it make sense to have a simple, up-or-down vote on whether or not we want to fix these problems?"

DeParle was optimistic that the president would have the votes to pass the massive bill. But none of legislation's advocates who spoke on Sunday indicated that those votes were in hand.

"I think we will get to that point where we will have the votes," predicted Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., a member of the Senate Democratic leadership. "I believe that we will pass health care reform this spring."

In a sober call to arms, Pelosi said lawmakers sometimes must enact policies that, even if unpopular at the moment, will help the public. "We're not here just to self-perpetuate our service in Congress," she said. "We're here to do the job for the American people."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Buffett: Execs should pay price for risky bets

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—Billionaire Warren Buffett, in his annual letter to shareholders, sternly urged companies to develop harsh penalties for executives who get into trouble with risky investments. Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc. delivered a 61 percent jump in net income because the value of its investments and derivatives rose sharply in 2009 after taking a beating the year before. But its businesses' exposure to housing construction helped keep it from outperforming the S&P 500 for the first time since 2004. Buffett used most of his letter, released Saturday, to reiterate the business basics that have made his company a juggernaut. But it did include a section about how corporations should manage risk. Buffett said CEOs and the boards that hired them should pay a steep price if their companies get into trouble with risky investments.

Thai PM orders more security after bank blasts

BANGKOK (AP)—Thailand's prime minister ordered stepped-up security in Bangkok on Sunday after four banks were targeted with small explosive devices. The attacks Saturday night, in which no one was hurt, came a day after the Supreme Court ordered $1.4 billion of exiled former leader Thaksin Shinawatra's assets seized for corruption. Authorities had voiced concern the verdict could spark violent protests by his supporters but none occurred. Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva told reporters Sunday that he did not know who was behind the attacks on Bangkok Bank, the country's biggest commercial bank.

Oil rises above $80 as regional stocks gain

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices rose above $80 a barrel Monday in Asia as crude traders followed regional stock markets higher. Benchmark crude for April delivery was up 56 cents to $80.22 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract added $1.49 to settle at $79.66. Oil traders, who often look to equities as a measure of overall investor sentiment, were cheered by a jump in all the major Asian stock indexes Monday amid recent signs that Asian manufacturing is recovering from last year's slump.

Not much impact from repeat buyer credit

By ADRIAN SAINZ
AP REAL ESTATE WRITER

It sounded like a great idea three months ago: Hand homeowners a $6,500 tax credit to find a new place to live, giving a thrust of energy to the housing market's recovery.

So far, people are staying put.

In November, the federal government extended a tax credit of up to $8,000 for people who hadn't owned a home for three years. This credit had helped boost home sales last summer and fall. Seeking to build on that momentum, the government added a new credit of up to $6,500 for current homeowners, hoping it would transform them into house-hunters this winter and spring.

But real estate agents around the country say the credit is doing little to elevate sales. Reasons vary.

The unemployment rate is still near 10 percent and consumer confidence is falling. Home prices have stabilized in some markets, but are still a third below their 2006 peak. Droves of people who want to sell are stuck because their home is worth less than they paid for it. Harsh winter weather has Americans shoveling driveways instead of preparing their home for buyer visits.

"No one is saying, `I need to buy something before it expires,'" said Tim Surratt, an agent with Greenwood King Properties in Houston.

The tax credit for current homeowners was intended to help stabilize prices and bolster the economy, but the housing market remains vulnerable. Sales of both new and previously occupied homes dropped in January, and the Mortgage Bankers Association's index of loan applications recently hit a 12 1/2-year low.

Germany's Merck buying Millipore for $6B plus debt

BILLERICA, Mass. (AP)—Germany's Merck KGaA said Sunday that it will pay $6 billion in cash to buy U.S. biotech equipment maker Millipore Corp. in a move to expand its presence beyond drugs and chemicals and into the life science sector.

The deal ends more than a week of speculation over Millipore's future.

Shares of the Billerica, Mass., company soared last week after reports said lab instrument maker Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc. had made a $6 billion offer. Millipore, which supplies tests and equipment to the biotechnology industry, then confirmed that it was evaluating strategic alternatives—including a possible sale. The company hired advisers Goldman Sachs and Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP to help it consider its options.

Based on Millipore's 56.3 million shares outstanding at Dec. 31, Merck's $107-per-share offer is worth $6.03 billion. Including assumed debt, Merck values the deal at $7.2 billion.

"This transaction is very attractive to shareholders, customers and employees of both companies," Karl-Ludwig Kley, chairman of Merck's executive board, said in a statement. The company said the acquisition will be a strong strategic fit that allows it to expand the breadth of its business, and will create a $2.9 billion partnership in the life science sector.

Merck said that currently, its chemicals business generates around 25 percent of the company's total revenue. Following the transaction, the chemicals business will contribute 35 percent of sales.

Merck's offer marks a 50 percent premium to Millipore's $71.34 closing stock price on Feb. 19, the last trading day before takeover reports surfaced. The deal is expected to be completed in the second half of 2010.

Nation

JFK runway closure to rattle nerves, wallets

NEW YORK (AP)—One runway, a whole lot of problems.

The main runway at New York's John F. Kennedy International will be closed for four months starting March 1. Millions of travelers will experience delays—including some not flying anywhere near the Big Apple.

With about one-third of JFK's traffic and half of its departures being diverted to three smaller runways, planes will wait on longer lines on the ground for takeoffs and in the air for landings. Delays at one of the nation's largest airports will ripple to cities across the U.S., including Los Angeles, San Francisco and Orlando.

Passengers using JFK also face another headache—higher ticket prices. JetBlue, American, Delta and other airlines have cut their schedules by about 10 percent for the shutdown period. They can raise prices because there will be a smaller number of seats to meet demand.

JFK's Bay Runway, at 14,572 feet, is one of the longest commercial runways in the world. It's a backup landing spot for the space shuttle, which has its next mission in April. The runway is being repaved with concrete instead of less-durable asphalt and widened to accommodate today's bigger planes.

The project will affect at least the first month of the peak travel season, which officially starts on Memorial Day. But the chosen four-month period was picked because it's the driest in the New York area, making weather-related construction delays less likely. Of course, prompt completion isn't certain. A similar runway repair in Minneapolis last year created thousands of delays when it was slowed by unseasonably wet weather.

JFK is already one of the nation's most delay-plagued airports. It ranked 28th out of 31 major airports in 2009 in on-time performance, according to the Department of Transportation. A delay at JFK, especially one early in the morning, can push back flights across the U.S.

The longest delays occur at peak hours—from about 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. ET and between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m.

The airlines and the airport are making adjustments. Besides cutting flights, airlines are adding time into their schedules. So although flights may take longer, more won't necessarily be considered late. Still, Mike Sammartino of the Federal Aviation Administration expects delays at JFK will be about 50 minutes during peak times and 29 minutes on average—similar to busy summer days.

AP

In this Feb. 18, 2007 file photo, a JetBlue Airbus A320, that just landed, taxis past another JetBlue plane being towed to a gate at John F. Kennedy International Airport, in New York.

Clinton heading to Latin America after Chile quake

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's weeklong, five-nation tour of Latin America is certain to focus on the earthquake in Chile, even as she tries to build support for fresh penalties against Iran.

Clinton

Clinton will briefly visit Santiago, Chile's capital, Tuesday morning. "We want to show America's support for the people of Chile while mindful of the realities on the ground," Clinton aide Philippe Reines said Sunday.

The secretary had been scheduled to go to Chile late Monday for talks with Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and President-elect Sebastian Pinera, who takes office March 11. But that meeting has been canceled as Chile struggles to recover from the quake.

Before Clinton left Washington on Sunday evening, she made clear she would show U.S. support for disaster rescue and recovery operations in Chile.

"Our hemisphere comes together in times of crisis, and we will stand side-by-side with the people of Chile in this emergency," Clinton said Saturday after President Barack Obama called Bachelet to offer assistance.

The State Department issued a travel alert Sunday urging U.S. citizens to avoid nonessential travel to Chile.

Clinton starts her tour in Montevideo, Uruguay, at Monday's inauguration of the country's new president, ex-guerrilla Jose Mujica. Mujica's election in November won praise from other left-leaning populist leaders in the region, including Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, a perennial thorn in the side of the U.S. who is cultivating closer ties with Iran.

U.S. officials say Clinton will meet with Mujica but has no plans for separate meetings with other inauguration guests—for example, Chavez or other like-minded leaders, such as Ecuador's Rafael Correa or Bolivia's Evo Morales.

Colleges enlist parents to curb problem drinking

By ERIC GORSKI
AP EDUCATION WRITER

At Virginia Tech, where tailgating and raucous apartment complex parties are time-honored rituals, university officials are turning increasingly to Mom and Dad to curb problem underage drinking.

This semester, the school in Blacksburg, Va., began notifying parents when their under-21 students are found guilty of even minor alcohol violations such as getting caught with a beer in a dorm room.

Although it's common for colleges to alert parents of major alcohol offenses—or when a student faces suspension—Virginia Tech is part of a small but growing number sending letters home on minor ones.

The debate about how much to involve parents in such cases is a balancing act for colleges and universities. Officials want to hold young adults accountable as they venture out on their own, are well aware that drinking is part of the college experience, and also recognize potential allies in a generation of hands-on parents who can help when things go too far.

"I think it helps students open up to parents," said Steven Clarke, director of Virginia Tech's College Alcohol Abuse Prevention Center. "And parents can be helpful in setting boundaries students might need."

The beefed-up parental notification policy is part of a broader strategy that includes alcohol-education classes and a "party positive" program that encourages responsible drinking.

The student reaction to the policy change, not surprisingly, has been less than enthusiastic.

"If you have one beer in the dorm and you get caught, I don't feel like parents should be notified," said Erik Pryslak, a junior engineering major. "Now that we're all in college, we're all adults. It's kind of your responsibility to take care of yourself. If you want to make your parents aware you're about to be kicked out of school, then it's on you."

Studies show that students who say their parents would disapprove of them drinking are less likely to drink heavily once they get to college, said Toben Nelson, an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health who has studied campus drinking.

At Virginia Tech, the school has operated on a "three strikes" system for years: Students get one strike for a minor alcohol violation and two for a major one—things like getting a DUI or vomiting all over a residence hall bathroom. Three strikes and a student is suspended for at least one semester.

After a spate of alcohol-related deaths on college campuses, Congress in the late 1990s changed student privacy laws to lower barriers to parental notification in cases involving students under 21.

Whale trainer's death jars safe world of adventure

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—It is billed as a leisurely boat tour. The shark surfaces, its fin slicing through the water.

The boat's captain, armed with a grenade launcher, blasts away at the bloodthirsty monster. Nearby gas lines explode and a column of fire erupts into the blue sky. We feel the heat from the flames, hear the shark's body churning in the water. A child hides her face in the crook of her mother's arm and whimpers as chilly water sprays everyone on the boat.

Of course, it isn't real. It's the "Jaws" ride at Universal Studios in Orlando, an attraction that runs hundreds of times a day.

Just miles away, officials at SeaWorld are holding a news conference to explain the death of Dawn Brancheau, a trainer who died when she was dragged underwater by a killer whale named Tilikum.

Orlando is billed as a nonstop adventure capital, ground zero of thrills and chills and action-packed fun—all during family friendly hours and with a $3.99 breakfast buffet to get you going.

There's Congo River Golf—which takes one of the world's most dangerous countries and turns it into a putt-putt course. At Disney's Animal Kingdom, you can "climb" Mt. Everest in a rollercoaster car. A little ways away, for the really adventurous, there's indoor skydiving.

And it's not just Orlando; across the globe, manufactured thrills entertain and amuse.

Yet every once in a while, something goes wrong. A roller coaster jumps the tracks, or a tiger leaps out of its pen, or a killer whale attacks a trainer, and that sense of safety is shattered.

"An event like this really shocks people," said Glenn Sparks, a professor of communication at Purdue University who has studied fright reactions to entertainment. "We say, uh oh, we didn't have control over this like we thought we did. It's a loss of control in this fantasy world. In our entertainment experience, we don't want reality to interfere. It's not something we bargained for."

ACROSS THE NATION

Arrest made in case of missing California girl

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Authorities say a registered sex offender has been arrested in the disappearance of a missing suburban San Diego teenager. San Diego County Sheriff William Gore tells The Associated Press that 30-year-old John Albert Gardner of Riverside County was arrested Sunday afternoon. He says investigators suspect Gardner is tied to the disappearance of 17-year-old Chelsea King of Poway, who went for a run on Thursday and didn't return. Gore says investigators linked Gardner to the crime through physical evidence recovered by investigators searching Rancho Bernardo Community Park, where King vanished. He wouldn't elaborate on the evidence.

Nearly 200K still without power after winter storm

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)—Nearly 200,000 homes and businesses were still without power Sunday as restoration efforts continued days after a slow-moving storm battered the Northeast with heavy snow, rain and high winds. More than 83,000 utility customers still lacked electricity late Sunday afternoon in New Hampshire, the hardest-hit state. New York had about 87,000 outages and Maine 23,000. At the peak of the storm, more than a million utility customers throughout the region had lost power. Hundreds of utility crews from as far away as Michigan and Maryland continued removing trees that knocked down power lines and replacing utility poles that snapped during last week's storm.

Tsunami advisory canceled in final US area

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—A tsunami advisory has been canceled in the last U.S. area that had been under any sort of alert following the Chilean earthquake. The Alaska Tsunami Warning Center canceled the advisory early Sunday morning for the far reaches of the Aleutian Islands, stretching from Sand Point to Attu in the west. Much earlier Saturday, a tsunami warning for Hawaii was canceled after just small waves hit the islands.

Witness: Glass 'everywhere' in NYC atrium collapse

NEW YORK (AP)—Ice broke through the ceiling of an atrium at the Sony Building in New York City, showering glass over partygoers who scurried to avoid it and leaving 10 with minor injuries, authorities and a witness said. Ice left by last week's storms fell from the 32nd floor of the building on Madison Avenue in Manhattan late Saturday night, shattering two 3- by 5-foot glass panels in the lobby, said Buildings Department spokesman Tony Sclafani. Shirley Rozman said she was attending a party celebrating the Jewish holiday of Purim in the building when she heard "what sounded like some plates breaking." She said she then heard a pop.

Asia

SKorea renews offer of incentives for disarmament

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's president said Monday that he wants to achieve "genuine" reconciliation with North Korea through dialogue and renewed his offer of a package of incentives for the North's nuclear disarmament.

The North has recently reached out to Seoul and Washington following months of tension over its nuclear and missile program. A U.S. State Department spokesman said Friday that the North could rejoin international nuclear disarmament talks in coming weeks.

"For genuine reconciliation and cooperation ... South and North Korea must resolve many pending issues through a dialogue," President Lee Myung-bak said in a nationally televised address marking Korea's 1919 uprising against Japanese colonial rule.

North Korea "must discuss with sincerity the 'grand bargain' deal that we have offered," Lee said.

Lee's "grand bargain" would provide the North with a set of political incentives and economic aid in exchange for the irreversible dismantling of its nuclear weapons program in a single step, rather than the step-by-step process pursued in the past. The single-step process is aimed at preventing North Korea from backtracking on its commitments after receiving the aid.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told reporters Friday that the United States was encouraged by signs that North Korea might return to international talks aimed at ending the North's nuclear program in return for aid. The countries participating in the talks are North Korea, the U.S., Russia, China, Japan and South Korea.

Her spokesman, P.J. Crowley, later said the talks could begin "in coming weeks or months."

North Korea quit the talks and conducted a second atomic test last year, inviting tighter U.N. sanctions. The regime has called for a lifting of the sanctions and peace talks formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War before it returns to the disarmament talks. The U.S., South Korea and Japan have responded the North must first return to the negotiations and produce progress.

AP

South Korean elementary school students wave national flags during a ceremony to celebrate the March First Independence Movement Day, the anniversary of the 1919 uprising against Japanese colonial rule, in Seoul, South Korea, Monday, March 1, 2010.

Afghanistan: 4 civilians die in suicide car bomb

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide car bomber targeted NATO forces Monday outside the major southern Afghan city of Kandahar, killing four civilians, the Interior Ministry said. It was not immediately known if there were any NATO casualties.

The attacker waited in a station-wagon taxi near a bridge between the airport and city that NATO troops regularly check for explosives, said Inhamullah Khan, an Afghan army official at the bombing site.

The assailant detonated the bomb as the convoy crossed the bridge in the morning, tossing a military vehicle into the ravine below, Khan said.

Khan did not have information on NATO casualties. NATO spokesman Maj. Marcin Walczak of the Polish Army said the international military coalition was aware of the incident but did not yet have any details on casualties.

The Interior Ministry confirmed four civilian deaths in a statement. Three of the civilians who died were in a car that had pulled over nearby to wait for the convoy to pass, Khan said.

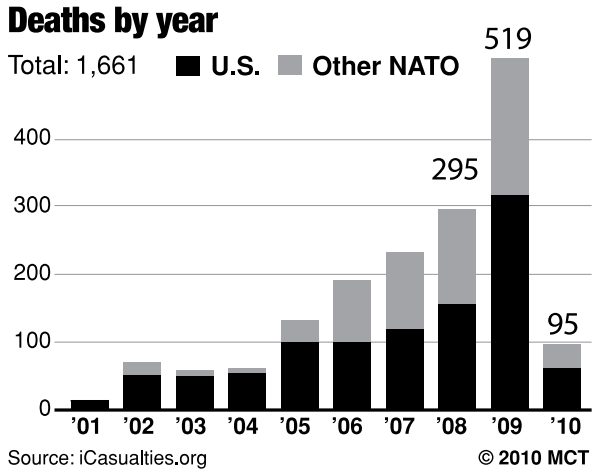
Kandahar city, the capital of the province of the same name, is east of Helmand province, where thousands of U.S., NATO and Afghan troops are conducting a two-week old offensive to wrest control of the town of Marjah.

The town has long been controlled by the Taliban and the assault is seen as the first step in a multi-month offensive that will eventually target Taliban strongholds around Kandahar city.

Afghanistan death toll

The number of U.S. fatalities in Afghanistan is now more than 1,000.

Deaths by year



Source: iCasualties.org

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Top countries

Deaths since 2001

U.S.	1,006
U.K.	263
Canada	140
France	40
Germany	34
Spain	28
Denmark	31
Italy	22
Netherlands	21
Poland	16
Australia	11

Poll setback tests Taiwan's China-friendly leader

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan's China-friendly President Ma Ying-jeou said Sunday by-election losses this weekend were a warning for his Nationalist party, while pro-government newspapers said it reflected public dissatisfaction with his leadership.

On Saturday, the Nationalists, who maintain a strong majority in parliament, suffered their third electoral setback in two months following a string of government blunders in domestic affairs.

They secured only one of four legislative seats up for grabs, losing the other three to the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party, which says Ma's initiatives to boost ties with Beijing threatens Taiwan's sovereignty and economy.

The Nationalists now control 75 seats in the 113-seat legislature. The DPP has 33.

Ma apologized to his supporters Sunday for the poor results.

"This is a huge warning for us and this shows we have not worked hard enough," he said.

Even pro-government newspapers said it reflected public concern over Ma's leadership on domestic issues, including the administration's botched response to Typhoon Morakot, which killed 700 people on the island in August. China Times said the government's decision last year to lift a ban on imports of U.S. bone-in-beef, which stoked public fear of a possible outbreak of mad cow disease, had also hurt the Ma administration.

"The legislative defeats show the public unhappiness with Ma's governance has yet to hit rock bottom," the newspaper said in an analysis.

United Daily News said Ma's public approval rating was now 29 percent, down from 33 percent two months ago—the lowest since Typhoon Morakot.

The newspaper conducted the poll by telephone on Saturday night after the election results, with responses from 1,181 people. It had a margin of error of 2.9 percentage points.

"After Ma took office, he has disappointed his supporters many times, and this is why the Nationalist party is having difficulties winning in recent elections," United Daily News said in an editorial.

RP troops kill 2 gunmen linked to massacre

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine troops clashed Monday with armed followers of a political warlord who was arrested in connection with the country's worst election-related massacre, killing two gunmen, the military said.

Troops on combat patrol confronted about 30 men in the outskirts of southern Maguindanao province on Monday, triggering a gunfight that killed two, said military spokesman Maj. Randolph Cabangbang.

Prosecutors have charged Andal Ampatuan Sr., a former three-term Maguindanao governor, and his son, Andal Ampatuan Jr., with murder in connection with the killings of 57 people on Nov. 23.

Among the massacre victims were supporters and relatives of Esmael Mangudadatu, who is running for governor of the province. They were headed to an election office to file Mangudadatu's candidacy papers when they were killed, along with at least 30 journalists and staff members who were providing news coverage of the event.

The Ampatuans have denied the charges, and most of their followers have fled a crackdown in the province. Still, thousands of militiamen loyal to the Ampatuan clan are in hiding and considered a security threat in Maguindanao. They are being pursued by government troops.

"Those who remain in hiding are the ones probably directly involved in the massacre," said Cabangbang, adding that thousands of troops continue to provide security in the impoverished province.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who had previously struck a political alliance with the Ampatuans, has named a commission to recommend steps to rid the Philippines of more than 100 private armies that illegally operate on the payroll of political warlords.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Thai king leaves hospital for 4 hours

BANGKOK (AP)—Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej briefly left the hospital where he has been treated for the past five months to make a late-night visit to his palace, an official said Sunday. It was the first time the 82-year-old monarch has left Siriraj Hospital since he was hospitalized Sept. 19 with fatigue and loss of appetite. Bhumibol left for Chitralada Palace at about 9 p.m. Saturday night on "personal" business and returned to the hospital at 1 a.m. Sunday, a palace official said.

Panchen Lama named to top advisory body in China

BEIJING (AP)—The Panchen Lama, the young man enthroned by Beijing as the second-highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism, has joined China's top legislative advisory body. The 20-year-old Panchen Lama, whose name is Gyaltsen Norbu, is emerging as Beijing's choice to supplant the Dalai Lama as the public face of Tibetan Buddhism and has taken on an increasingly political role in recent years. He has made appearances with Communist Party leaders and publicly praised Chinese rule in Tibet. The Panchen Lama was among 13 people named to the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference on Sunday, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

Militants destroy NATO oil tanker in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistani militants have attacked a tanker carrying fuel to NATO and US forces in Afghanistan. Peshawar police chief Liaquat Ali Khan says police fought with the insurgents early Monday and killed one. Khan says the other attackers escaped and the tanker was destroyed. Pakistani militants often attack trucks carrying fuel and other supplies for foreign troops in neighboring Afghanistan. The attacks affect only a tiny percentage of the thousands of convoys that pass over Pakistani soil each week.

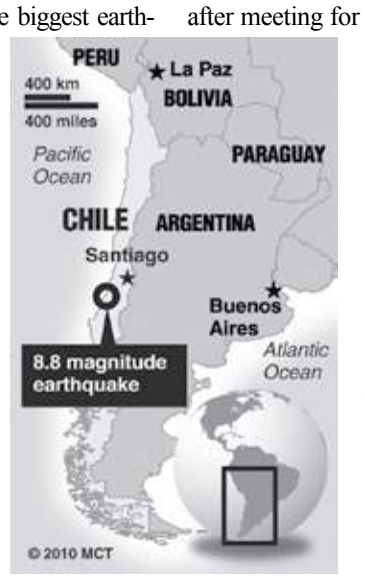
China urges checks after deadly fireworks blast

BEIJING (AP)—China has issued an urgent order to local authorities to strengthen safety measures after an explosion triggered by Lunar New Year fireworks killed 21 people and injured 48 in a southern village. The State Council's Work Safety Commission said in a notice that authorities around the country should learn from the mistakes that caused the blast late Friday in the southern province of Guangdong, the deadliest accident of the 15-day Spring Festival. The celebrations are set to end Sunday with a lantern festival. Fireworks are often a key part.

World

Chile quake death toll hits 708 as rescue ramps up

CONCEPCION, Chile (AP)—Heroism and banditry mingled on Chile's shattered streets Sunday as rescuers braved aftershocks digging for survivors and the government sent soldiers and ordered a nighttime curfew to quell looting. The death toll climbed to 708 in one of the biggest earthquakes in centuries.



In the hard-hit city of Concepcion, firefighters pulling survivors from a toppled apartment block were forced to pause because of tear gas fired to stop looters, who were wheeling off everything from microwave ovens to canned milk at a damaged supermarket across the street.

Efforts to determine the full scope of destruction were undermined by an endless string of terrifying aftershocks that continued to turn buildings into rubble. Officials said 500,000 houses were destroyed or badly damaged, and President Michele Bachelet said "a growing number" of people were listed as missing.

"We are facing a catastrophe of such unthinkable magnitude that it will require a giant effort" to recover, Bachelet said after meeting for six hours with ministers and generals in La Moneda Palace, itself chipped and cracked.

She signed a decree giving the military control over security in the province of Concepcion, where looters were pillaging supermarkets, gas stations, pharmacies and banks. Men and women hurried away with plastic containers of chicken, beef and sausages.

Virtually every market and supermarket had been looted—and no food or drinking water could be found. Many people in Concepcion expressed anger at the authorities for not stopping the looting or bringing in supplies. Electricity and water services were out of service.

AP

A bus is seen parked by a destroyed road in Talcahuano, Chile, Sunday, Feb. 28, 2010, following a devastating earthquake that struck Chile early Saturday, Feb. 27.

"We are overwhelmed," a police officer told The Associated Press.

Bachelet said a curfew was being imposed from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. and only security forces and other emergency personnel would be allowed on the streets. Police vehicles drove around announcing the curfew over loudspeakers.

As nightfall neared, hundreds of people put up tents and huddled around wood fires in parks and the grassy medians of avenues, too fearful to return to their homes amid continuing strong aftershocks.

Bachelet, who leaves office on March 11, said the country would accept some of the offers of aid that have poured in from around the world.

She said Chile needs field hospitals and temporary bridges, water purification plants and damage assessment experts—as well as rescuers to help relieve workers who have been laboring frantically since the magnitude-8.8 quake struck before dawn Saturday.

Man, daughter fall 13 floors in Chile quake

CONCEPCION, Chile (AP)—When their 13th-floor apartment began to shake, Alberto Rozas pulled his 7-year-old daughter into the bathroom doorway and waited for it to stop.

Instead, they fell.

Plummeting as their brand-new apartment building toppled like a felled tree, they hugged each other all the way down.

Rozas had no idea which way was up until he looked through his apartment's shattered window and spotted light - "the light of the full moon."

Rozas and his daughter, Fernanda, clambered up and to safety with nothing more than a few cuts, scrapes and bruises.

"The earthquake and the fall were one single, horrible thing," Rozas told The Associated Press on Sunday. "I held onto her and she never let me go."

Rozas' neighbors who lived on the other side of the hall found themselves trapped beneath the structure, while rescuers painstakingly used electric saws and a generator-powered hammer to cut into the concrete.

"We don't have any listening devices or cameras," said Ian Argo, a firefighter commander.

As of Sunday, 23 people had been pulled alive from the 15-story Rio Alta building and seven bodies had been removed. An estimated 60 people remained trapped inside.

Socovil, the company that opened the concrete-and-glass structure last June, issued a statement saying it had complied with all building codes. But many residents were angry.

"The construction was obviously poor," Rozas said.

Abel Torres, 25, had a view of the Bio Bio River from his sixth-floor apartment. He had just gotten home from his job at a nightclub when the quake hit at 3:34 a.m.

"My TV fell on top of me and suddenly I saw stars shooting across my window," he said.

Torres and his roommate stacked furniture to reach that window - now a skylight - and escaped without clothes, coated in dust.

On the second floor, Maribel Alarcon and her husband Gunther rushed to comfort their 2-year-old son Oliver when he started crying moments before the temblor.

Their concern was their salvation: Oliver's bedroom was the only place spared in their apartment.

"We prayed a lot," Alarcon said. "And if God let us survive, that was because someone was going to rescue us."

Much higher in the building, Rozas was sleeping alongside his daughter when the shaking began.

"There was dust, noise, everything falling," he said. "We went to the bathroom doorway. Then there was the fall. Finally it stopped."

After they climbed out of the wreckage, Rozas took Fernanda to her mother's house, then returned to help firefighters understand the layout of the toppled building.

He retrieved medicine and clothes for Fernanda. And his own guitar.

Iraqi PM calls pre-vote candidate ban a legitimate ploy

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's prime minister Sunday defended a ban of candidates with alleged ties to Saddam Hussein's former regime, calling it a legitimate decision that would not affect Sunni turnout at the polls.

In an interview with The Associated Press just a week before March 7 elections, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki also said he did not see any need at this point for U.S. forces to stay in the country past their planned 2011 departure date.

Al-Maliki, who came to power in 2006 as a compromise candidate, has overseen a return to relative stability since the height of the insurgency, but is facing stiff competition in his bid for another four-year term.

The decision to bar hundreds of candidates from the election, including two prominent Sunni lawmakers, for alleged ties to Saddam's ruling party has dominated Iraq's political debate for weeks and reflects the deep sectarian differences that still divide the country.

"This will never affect the turnout of the Sunnis in the elections. The decision was taken because some of these people were blatantly propagating Baath party ideas, and there is information that some of them are involved in actions that serve the Baath party," al-Maliki said.

Many in the country's Sunni minority, which dominated the Baath Party leadership, were outraged by the decision, which they felt unjustly targeted Sunni political figures in an attempt to politically sideline them. A sectarian breakdown of the list, which includes Shiites as well, has never been released.

The murky process—about which little information was disclosed—raised questions about whether Sunnis would feel disillusioned by the vote and stay away from the polls. At one point, a prominent Sunni politician on the list even pulled his party from the race, and urged others Sunni parties to withdraw as well, raising fears of a Sunni boycott. That decision has since been rescinded.

In discussing the ban, al-Maliki appeared to distance himself from the two men who initiated the process—Shiite politicians Ali al-Lami and Ahmed Chalabi. Both are running in the election, raising questions about why they were being allowed to sideline their competition.

As the heads of the Accountability and Justice Committee that vetted candidates for ties to the former regime, al-Lami and Chalabi shocked the Iraqi political system when they announced a blacklist containing hundreds of names.

But al-Maliki emphasized that the legal justification for the eventual ban came not from the pair's initial decision but from a later committee, set up with parliamentary backing, to investigate their findings. The question of whether the Accountability and Justice Committee had a legal basis to take action has been a key source of contention in this debate.

How to deal with the former members of the Baathist regime has been a long-running political dispute in Iraq. In 2003, the U.S. Coalition Provisional Authority disbanded the Iraqi army and purged the government of tens of thousands of former Baath Party members—steps that were widely considered to have helped foster the insurgency.

In 2008, thousands of former party cadres were allowed to resume government jobs as part of a national reconciliation process, but last fall tensions escalated again when al-Maliki accused Baathists of being behind a series of bloody bombings targeting government buildings in Baghdad.

WORLD BRIEFS

Israeli police, Palestinians clash at holy site

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli riot police dispersed a crowd of masked Palestinian youths throwing stones in the heart of Jerusalem's Old City on Sunday, in a violent reminder of tensions at the holiest site in the contested city. In the past, even seemingly minor incidents at the hilltop compound—known to Jews as the Temple Mount and to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary—have ignited clashes and protests throughout the region. The Palestinian president condemned what he called an Israeli "attack" against an Islamic holy site. Micky Rosenfeld, an Israeli police spokesman, said police dispersed some 20 masked protesters who had holed up overnight in the compound's Al-Aqsa mosque and then pelted visiting tourists with objects early Sunday.

Fierce storms in Europe kill 51, mostly in France

PARIS (AP)—A violent late winter storm with fierce rain and hurricane-strength winds ripped across western Europe on Sunday, battering France and four other countries, leaving at least 51 people dead. The storm, named Xynthia, was the worst in France since 1999 when 90 people died. Prime Minister Francois Fillon held an emergency cabinet meeting and afterward called the storm a "national catastrophe." Many of the at least 45 victims in France drowned, while others died when hit by parts of buildings or trees and branches that were ripped off by the wind. At least a dozen people were missing Sunday and 59 others were injured.

Palestinian Cabinet stakes claim amid shrine furor

HEBRON, West Bank (AP)—The Palestinian Cabinet has moved its weekly meeting to Hebron in a symbolic act against Israel's addition of a contested shrine in this West Bank city to its list of national heritage sites. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has denounced Israel's move as an "attack on the holy places," while his Islamic militant Hamas rivals in Gaza called for a new violent uprising against Israel. The Palestinians said the move of Monday's Cabinet session from Ramallah to Hebron was a way to alert the international community to issues relating to holy sites.

Overdrive

GM, Chevy crossovers' successes are fueled by compromise

By WARREN BROWN
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Electricity and other alternative fuels will play a big role in the automobile industry by 2025. But "big" does not mean anything resembling dominance.

That means gasoline will be around for a while, especially in America, as long as car companies continue building smaller, lighter gasoline engines without sacrificing power.

Welcome to the age of appealing compromise, represented by the 2010 GMC Terrain SLT-2 crossover wagon. It matters not that we've seen this one before in the discernibly different body of the 2010 Chevrolet Equinox LT. There's a story about compromise there, too.

Car manufacturers call it "badge engineering." It's a strategy to reduce vehicle development and manufacturing costs while appealing to different market niches, usually at variable prices. It works like this:

A manufacturer uses the same basic vehicle structure or "platform." Computer-assisted design is employed to change the look and feel of the end product. All major car manufacturers do it, or something similar to it.

What matters today is satisfying consumers' contradictory needs and desires: power with fuel economy; maximum safety with speed and handling; SUV utility and ruggedness with sedan ride and even sports car appearance (the Acura ZDX and Honda Crosstour, for example); station wagon practicality with a rugged SUV look, though lacking the ability for truly tough off-road runs (the Terrain); and a mom-mobile with the persona of Sarah Palin (the Equinox).

Would you like proof that this world of compromise is working? Go to any Chevrolet or GMC dealership that survived GM's blitzkrieg reorganization under bankruptcy. The remaining Chevrolet dealers are begging for as many Equinoxes as they can get. Buick-GMC dealers (formerly Buick-Pontiac-GMC) are doing the same thing in pursuit of the Terrain. Both models are runaway hits—for different reasons.

THE WASHINGTON POST

The car industry is on a quest to build smaller, lighter gasoline engines without sacrificing power. The compromise that requires is represented here by the 2010 GMC Terrain SLT-2 crossover wagon, top, and the 2010 Chevrolet Equinox LT. Both models are runaway hits, but for different reasons.

My wife, Mary Anne, and I discovered as much in driving both models.

Equinox buyers wanted a stylish family vehicle—as opposed to a "real" SUV, a minivan or a station wagon. They also wanted what they considered "fair" fuel economy, which means good mileage for the vehicle's size and intended use.

Most Equinox buyers we spoke to were more interested in hauling family, groceries and light loads. They went for GM's 2.4-liter, inline four-cylinder engine with 182-horsepower and 172-foot-pounds torque. It satisfied their power needs and wants, and kept them reasonably happy at the gas pump, with an estimated 16 to 24 mpg in city traffic and 24 to 34 mpg on the highway.

We chose the same engine for our time in the Terrain, which turned out to be an unpopular choice for other Terrain drivers/owners, or people who wanted the rugged looks, bigger engine and the occasional function of an SUV without an SUV's gas-guzzling nature.

Terrain people wanted the power of a V-8 with the fuel economy of a V-6, or the fuel-economy of a four-cylinder engine as long as it could deliver 200 horsepower or more. They were unabashed in their pursuit of contrary desires. More Terrain people also mentioned their preference for all-wheel drive, which is available on the Terrain and the Equinox.

Maybe that's because we drove an all-wheel-drive Terrain in the East Coast's brutal snowstorms, during which it performed beautifully. By comparison, we drove the Equinox, including a front-wheel-drive model, in the balmy days of summer, when it served us well, too.

Still, Terrain drivers and owners tended to lean more toward GM's line of direct fuel-injected V-6 engines that come with 264 horsepower and all the chutzpah of a V-8. It had a combined 23 city-highway mileage.

Techno-compromises, such as getting more power out of smaller gasoline engines, will remain a reality as long as car companies keep giving buyers what GM is giving them in the Terrain and Equinox—excellent fit and finish, differentiated design and feel, comfort, safety and utility—all at an affordable price.

Performance is there. But it's for real-world drivers who understand that when hauling family and stuff, "performance" means more than zipping around corners at high speeds.

That also will hold true for alternatively fueled vehicles, when they finally arrive in meaningful numbers.

NUTS & BOLTS

COMPLAINT
Neither the Terrain nor the Equinox will please everybody: "not enough power" in the four-cylinder model; not enough cargo space for people who need a large wagon or sport-utility vehicle but don't want either; and certainly not enough zoom-zoom for those who seek sports car performance. But both should be on the shopping lists of people considering compact crossover utility models.

HEAD-TURNING QUOTIENT
Style counts. Terrain and Equinox shoppers are positively motivated by the styling cues of both models.

RIDE, HANDLING AND ACCELERATION
Ride and comfort are good in both models. Handling is excellent on dry roads and stable/confident in deep snow. Acceleration is good when and where needed. (But I understand why many Terrain people prefer the V-6.)

BODY STYLE/LAYOUT
The Terrain and Equinox are based on the same light-truck platform. They are identical in structure and components; both are available with front-wheel drive or all-wheel-drive.

ENGINE'S TRANSMISSION
The 2.4-liter inline four-cylinder engine (182 horsepower/172 foot-pounds of torque) is standard in the Terrain and Equinox. The optional direct-injection V-6 engine (264 horsepower/22 foot-pounds of torque) is optional on both the Terrain and Equinox, excluding the base Equinox. All models have a six-speed automatic transmission that also can be shifted manually.

CAPACITIES
The Terrain and Equinox have seats for five people. Both have 31.6 cubic feet of cargo capacity with the rear seats up. With rear seats down, it's 64 cubic feet. The fuel tanks in both models hold 18 gallons of recommended regular unleaded gasoline.

MILEAGE
The best fuel economy comes in the front-wheel-drive, four-cylinder versions of both models, with a combined city-highway 26 mpg government rating.

SAFETY
Standard equipment in the Terrain (much of it also in the Equinox) includes front and rear ventilated disc brakes; antilock braking protection; electronic stability and traction control; side, head and rear airbags; and OnStar emergency communications.

PRICES
Base prices for the 2010 Terrain, depending on which of eight styles is chosen, are $24,250 to $31,300. Base prices for the Equinox, with the same number of styles, are $22,615 to $29,970. Add a $745 shipping charge to either.

MOTORING Q&A

Noise isn't always sign of brake trouble

By PAUL BRAND
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

QUESTION: The brakes on my 2003 Ford Expedition make a rubbing or grabbing noise when I use them. The dealer found nothing wrong. Does this sound like a problem?

ANSWER: Noise from the contact between brake pads and brake rotors/discs is not abnormal. If the components aren't worn to the point of needing replacement, have the dealer or a shop deglaze the pads and scuff the rotors with a non-directional finish pattern, then break in or "bed" the brakes to mate the pads to the rotors. This should reduce if not eliminate the noise.

If the symptom is more of a shudder than just a noise, have the dealer check service bulletin 06-3-16, dated February 2006, that suggests an updated brake rotor matched to low-dust brake pads.

■■■

Q: I have a 2006 Buick LaCrosse. Ever since it was new, I have had problems with the dash lights. Early in the morning if I am driving west away from the sun, and in the evening when I am driving east, the dashboard lights including the clock and radio dial do not work. Once the sun comes up high enough, they work.

Two different dealerships could not fix it. I called the Buick hotline, and they said there was no fix.

A: There is now. My Alldata automotive database pulled up service bulletin 08-08-42-001B dated May 2008 that describes this situation perfectly. The body control module (BCM) is commanding the headlights to turn on in low-light conditions, which reduces the brightness of the instruments, radio and clock. Fortunately, there's an easy fix. Have your dealer reprogram the BCM with updated calibration files.

MOTORING NOTE:
I've had several interesting responses to last week's request for technical reasons to back into a parking space so that, on a cold start, the transmission is first shifted into drive rather than reverse:

■ The best (from D. Helling): "After spending 35 years repairing 7,000 automatic transmissions, I've always told my family members not to stuff it in reverse right after it starts—you'll break a lip seal. It's eight times mechanically more difficult for an auto trans to back up than it is to go forward, so the transmission raises hydraulic pressure by about three times to make the clutches hold in reverse."

■ The funniest (from Bill Nelson): "At Scout camp in the mountains near Los Angeles we were instructed to back into the parking spots. The reason given was that in case of a forest fire, there would not be delays leaving while waiting for someone to back out of their space and then having to turn around."

■ The most logical (from S. Johnson): "I always back into my garage, so that I can start tomorrow the right way by going forward. It helps to start the day going in the right direction. Also, too many close calls backing out of the driveway ... before my brain is engaged."

■ The most detailed (from R. Kane): "In the cold, one might assert that it is easier on the transmission to be put in drive and off you go, rather than having to switch from reverse to drive while the transmission is quite cold. With modern transmissions, this is probably a very minor point, but it does exist. A second point: Most reading I have seen regarding fuel-efficient driving suggests you do your backing up when you get home rather than in the dead cold of morning. So fuel savings, though small, may be a motivator."

Paul Brand is author of How to Repair Your Car *and an automotive troubleshooter, driving instructor and former race-car driver. Readers may write to him at: Star Tribune, 425 Portland Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minn. 55488 or via e-mail at paulbrand@startribune.com. Please explain the problem in detail and include a daytime phone number. It isn't always possible to send a personal reply.*

Life & Style

It's 'Hurt Locker' vs. 'Avatar' for best picture

By RAFER GUZMÁN
NEWSDAY

Ask the critics about the best movie of the year and the answer will be nearly unanimous: Kathryn Bigelow's "The Hurt Locker," a jarringly violent look at an Army bomb squad in Iraq.

Ask the folks who actually pay for their tickets, however, and they'll tell you it's James Cameron's "Avatar," a high-tech fantasy-adventure that recently became the top-grossing movie of all time.

These two films, widely considered the front-runners to take home the best picture Oscar March 7, couldn't be more different. They provide an unusually stark example of the choice that voters of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences face every year: Should the "best" picture be the most intelligent and thought-provoking? Or should it be the most enjoyable and entertaining? In short, are the Oscars about art or commerce?

Over the years the pendulum has swung rather wildly. In 2008 the best picture Oscar went to "No Country for Old Men," an enigmatic literary adaptation from the Coen brothers. By contrast, last year's winner was "Slumdog Millionaire," an action-romance that featured a Bollywood dance number. Over the decades the award has gone to subtle dramas (1980 winner "Ordinary People") but also to slam-bang epics (the 2000 film "Gladiator").

That unpredictability keeps the Oscars exciting—at least sometimes. In past years, audiences have been tuning out the annual awards broadcast on ABC, partly because the nominees have been critical rather than popular favorites. Who wants to stay up late and root for a movie you haven't seen? Last year's show drew about 36 million viewers, compared to the 55 million or so who watched in 1998, the year "Titanic" won.

In response, the academy this year expanded the best picture field to 10 nominees, up from the usual five, in the hopes that more well-known films would make the cut. As a result, the 10 nominees include not just serious-minded fare like the urban drama "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire," but several blockbusters whose grosses topped $100 million. Among them: the heart-tugging sports movie "The Blind Side," the sci-fi flick "District 9" and the animated crowd-pleaser "Up."

"I've been saying this is the populist Oscars," says Harry Medved, spokesman for the movie-ticket service Fandango. "The fact that you've got movies that are huge box-office hits for best picture means that finally, the awards will be relevant to TV watchers around the country."

In decades past, this didn't seem to be a problem. In the 1940s and '50s, the major studios reliably produced well-written, star-studded crowd-pleasers. And the winners really did seem to be the cream of the crop: "Casablanca," "All About Eve," "From Here to Eternity." In hindsight, at least, it's tough to imagine feeling disappointed or alienated by such Hollywood high-water marks.

It wasn't until the '60s and '70s that movies, like the overall climate of the country, became a little more challenging. As highbrow foreign films made inroads into American culture, the Oscars began nominating edgy, difficult movies like the ultra-violent "Bonnie and Clyde" (1967) and Robert Altman's semi-experimental "Nashville" (1975). In 1977 the best picture nominees were particularly striking: the Watergate expose "All the President's Men," the cynical satire "Network," Martin Scorsese's blood-soaked "Taxi Driver" and Hal Ashby's "Bound for Glory," about folk musician Woody Guthrie. (The winner, however, was "Rocky.")

That turbulent era reinforced an Oscar truism: Voters tend to favor timely, topical or issue-oriented movies. Among this year's nominees are the recession-themed "Up in the Air," the sexual-abuse drama "Precious" and the race-conscious sports movie "The Blind Side." Even the popcorn flick "District 9" can be read as a political allegory for South African apartheid.

"From the beginning, the academy members have always gone for the Important Movies," says film critic Leonard Maltin. "They're suckers for that. They haven't changed their stripes."

That explains the nomination for "The Hurt Locker," which directly addresses America's war in the Middle East. Other movies that have tackled that theme, like "Redacted" and "Lions for Lambs," went largely ignored by the Oscars and the public alike. "The Hurt Locker" could become the first war movie of any kind to win the top Oscar since Oliver Stone's "Platoon" in 1987.

"Avatar" also counts as an Important Movie, though in a very different way: Its motion-capture techniques, groundbreaking 3-D effects and computer animation—all brought to unprecedented levels of sophistication—may open new doors to filmmakers. Maltin isn't alone in calling the approximately $230 million film a game-changer, although for now it's a game few directors can afford to play.

As of last week, several Internet betting sites had "Avatar" as the odds-on favorite, followed by "The Hurt Locker." Either way, as long as viewers tune in, the big winner will be the Oscars themselves.

THE BATTLE OF THE EXES

Two of this year's highest-profile Oscar nominees are not only highly respected filmmakers but former spouses. Stylistically, at least, their differences don't seem irreconcilable.

MICHAEL TERCHA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/MCT

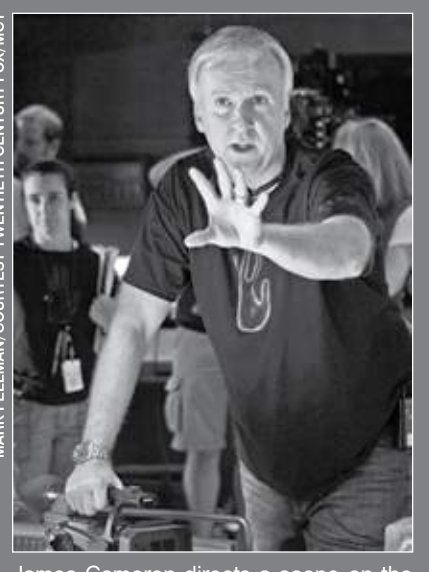
Director Kathryn Bigelow's new movie "The Hurt Locker" is the first narrative feature to make full, unnerving dramatic sense of the war in Iraq.

■ KATHRYN BIGELOW

AGE: 58
OSCAR CONTENDER: "The Hurt Locker"
KNOWN FOR: Artsy film theory meets face-crunching action
CAREER HIGH: "Point Break" (1991), a post-modern pulp masterpiece, with FBI agent Keanu Reeves chasing bank-robbing surfer Patrick Swayze
CAREER LOW: "Blue Steel" (1990), overwrought feminist thriller starring Jamie Lee Curtis as a hyper-aggressive cop
OVERLOOKED: "Strange Days" (1995). Stylish, sleazy sci-fi flick with Ralph Fiennes as a virtual-reality peddler
PAST AWARDS: Very few until "The Hurt Locker," which has racked up scores of critical, festival and industry honors
OSCAR CHANCES: Bigelow recently won the Directors Guild of America's top award, a near-faultless Oscar predictor—which means Bigelow could become the first woman ever to win the gold for best director.

■ JAMES CAMERON

MARK FELLMAN/COURTESY TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX/MCT



James Cameron directs a scene on the set of "Avatar."

AGE: 55
OSCAR CONTENDER: "Avatar"
KNOWN FOR: High-tech razzle-dazzle anchored by old-fashioned storytelling
CAREER HIGH: "Titanic" (1997). Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet play young lovers on the doomed ship. Grand, romantic and immensely popular, comparable to a classic like "Gone With the Wind"
CAREER LOW: "Piranha II: The Spawning" (1981). Hey, you gotta start somewhere.
OVERLOOKED: "The Abyss" (1989). Not a blockbuster, especially by Cameron's standards, but an effective sci-fi romance with Oscar-winning underwater effects
PAST AWARDS: Oscars for directing and editing best picture "Titanic"
OSCAR CHANCES: "Avatar" has the edge after winning the Golden Globe for best dramatic film, but "The Hurt Locker" has critical momentum on its side.

Harry Potter speaks for gay suicide prevention

By MICHAEL KUCHWARA
AP DRAMA WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Daniel Radcliffe is explaining why he has just filmed a public service announcement for The Trevor Project, the leading organization focusing on suicide prevention efforts among gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered youth.

Because his parents were both actors, "I grew up knowing a lot of gay men and it was never something that I even thought twice about—that some men were gay and some weren't," the "Harry Potter" megastar said Friday. "And then I went to school and (for) the first time ... I came across homophobia. ... I had never encountered it before. It shocked me.

"I have always hated anybody who is not tolerant of gay men or lesbians or bisexuals," the British actor added. "Now I am in the very fortunate position where I can actually help or do something about it."

The result is a public service announcement that was filmed Friday at the organization's Wall Street offices. The announcement is scheduled to air sometime this spring.

Radcliffe first became aware of The Trevor Project, founded in 1998 by three filmmakers, while he was appearing on Broadway in the 2008 revival of "Equus." Their movie, "Trevor," which won an Academy Award for best short film, concerned a gay teen who attempts suicide. The Trevor Project allows young people to call in for counseling or just to talk.

"I have described myself as being 'gently eccentric' and slightly different as a person just because I've had a very different set of influences growing up than anybody else in my peer group did," the 20-year-old Radcliffe said. "I've always felt very lucky to have the life that I've had. I never had to cope with anything serious about my religion or sexual orientation or anything like that.

"I think it's important for somebody from a big, commercial movie series like 'Harry Potter' and particularly because I am not gay or bisexual or transgendered. ... The fact that I am straight makes not a difference, but it shows that straight people are incredibly interested and care a lot about this as well."

AP

In this July 10, 2009 file photo, actor Daniel Radcliffe poses for a portrait in New York.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Queen of Soul says she's in control on new album

DETROIT (AP)—The Queen of Soul says she's taking control of her newest collection. Aretha Franklin offered a preview Friday of several songs from her forthcoming album, "Aretha: A Woman Falling out of Love," in a downtown Detroit restaurant. She wrote and produced a few of the songs and is executive producer of the album that's expected to be released in late March. She says the collection of a dozen songs was inspired by a relationship she was in a few years ago, which "before you know it it became Aretha, a woman falling out of love." She held court at a "high tea listening party" for family, friends, reporters and local dignitaries. One track planned for the album features a recitation by actor Billy Dee Williams that she says is "sizz-LING."

Rap artist Juvenile arrested for pot possession

CHALMETTE, Louisiana (AP)—The rapper Juvenile and his music producer have been arrested for misdemeanor possession of marijuana after neighbors told police they could smell pot coming from a house being used as a recording studio in Louisiana. The 34-year-old rap star, whose real name is Terius Gray, was booked on Thursday at a jail in St. Bernard Parish southeast of New Orleans. Gray and his 42-year-old producer Leroy Edwards were released later that night on bond. There was no phone listing for Gray and a sheriff's spokesman said he did not know whether he had an attorney. Juvenile is best known for the song "Back That Thing Up."

Mexican author Carlos Montemayor dies at 62

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexican author and guerrilla movement scholar Carlos Montemayor died Sunday, his publisher said. He was 62. A historian and linguist whose academic work centered on indigenous culture and rebels, Montemayor was sympathetic to the armed Zapatista uprising in 1994 in the southern state of Chiapas. Montemayor, who had been battling stomach cancer, "distinguished himself for his social activism, especially in favor of the most vulnerable groups in Mexico," Random House Mandadori said in a statement. In 2008 he joined a commission tasked with mediating between the government and the leftist People's Revolutionary Army, or EPR, over the group's claims that two of its members were taken by security forces in Oaxaca state. His best-known novel, "War in Paradise," is a fictional account of a real-life guerrilla movement led by Lucio Cabanas in southern Guerrero state in the 1970s, and the government's campaign against it.

Pamela Anderson asks Canada to end seal hunt

By JEREMY HAINSWORTH
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)—Pamela Anderson sent a letter Saturday to Canada's prime minister requesting an end to the country's annual seal hunt.

The Canadian actress and spokeswoman for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals dropped the letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper in a mailbox in front of the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans office.

Anderson called the hunt "an embarrassment to Canada" at a news conference, saying she made the appeal during the Winter Olympic Games here because "the whole world is watching Canada."

Canada's annual East Coast seal hunt from mid-November to mid-May, mostly in Newfoundland and Labrador and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, is the largest in the world, killing an average of 275,000 harp seals.

The hunt has long been controversial. Animal rights groups believe it is cruel, poorly monitored and provides little economic benefit. Seal hunters and Canadian authorities say it is sustainable, humane and provides income for isolated communities.

Anderson said in her letter that there is little ice in the Gulf of St. Lawrence for the seal birthing season.

"The absence of this birthing habitat will have dangerous consequences for the entire harp-seal population. Without ice, mother seals will be forced to abort their pups in the water," Anderson said in the letter, which included signatures from more than 50,000 people who want the annual hunt to end permanently.

AP

Pamela Anderson models a creation in the Richie Rich A*MUSE Fashion Show Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010 during Fashion Week in New York.

Fisheries and Oceans officials confirmed there is very little ice in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and off the eastern coast of Newfoundland and southern Labrador.

"Similar circumstances in the past have resulted in higher than normal pup mortality," said department spokesman Alain Belle-Isle.

Belle-Isle said poor ice conditions in the traditional birthing locations could result in a movement of pregnant seals to nontraditional areas farther north.

"It is unknown if this would result in increased mortality of young," said Belle-Isle.

Canadian scientists use information on pup mortality resulting from poor ice conditions in their management of the harp seal population.

There are an estimated 6.8 million harp seals in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, the Fisheries and Oceans department said.

The European Union has banned imports of all products and processed goods derived from seals, including their skins—which are used to make fur coats, bags and adorn clothing—as well as meat, oil blubber, organs and seal oil, which is used in some omega-3 pills.

It exempts products derived from traditional hunts carried out by Inuit in Canada's Arctic, as well as those from Greenland, Alaska and Russia.

Anderson's plea may fall on deaf ears after Harper and his cabinet dined on seal last August in support of the industry.

New documentary on Nobel laureate Szymborska

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—A rare documentary about Nobel Prize winning poet Wislawa Szymborska portrays a lively yet distinguished woman who savors the world's contrasts, from 17th-century Dutch painting to boxing.

And, in a bit of unsuspected prescience, it shows a school document from 1937 that saw a classmate declare that she would one day win the Nobel Prize in literature, a feat she accomplished in 1996.

The 70-minute documentary "Sometimes Life is Bearable" by Katarzyna Kolenda-Zaleska, which aired Sunday, is the first time the notoriously media-shy writer has offered such insight into her life and fascinations. She let a crew from Poland's TVN television visit her at home in Krakow and accompany her on travels throughout Europe from Italy to Ireland.

Viewers see Szymborska, 86, enjoying her less-known literary hobby—composing saucy limericks—while visiting places including Moher, Ireland, and Corleone, Sicily.

She is shown visiting art galleries and browsing in small shops for kitschy objects of art for herself and for friends.

But, in a more serious vein, she also explains why, as a young poet in 1953, she mourned the death of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin

"I wrote it. A pity. I regret it," she said, recalling that, at the time, many Polish intellectuals had placed great faith and hope in communism in the aftermath of World War II. "I didn't do that for career or for money," she said. "That's how I thought then."

In the film, Woody Allen, Czech playright-turned-president Vaclav Havel and British anthropologist Jane Goodall speak of their appreciation for Szymborska's verse, which deals with the profound or tragic in life through small details of daily existence, laden with empathy that is sometimes veiled in a joke, sometimes in irony.

"She is able to capture the pointlessness and sadness of life, but somehow still be affirmative," Allen said. "She fulfills my definition of what an important artist should be: profound, but always remembering that his obligation is to entertain the reader."

Szymborska's interest in Goodall's work with chimpanzees and her love for animals suggests she draws more fascination from nature than from civilization.

Her distance to the things worldly and distinction is, perhaps, best summarized in the film by a long, drawn-out search in her apartment's many cupboards for the Nobel Prize medal—eventually found buried deep in a distant corner and then placed in a drawer with old souvenirs and medals.

She still refers to the 1.3 million kroner prize—the highest honor for literature there is—as the "Stockholm Tragedy" that upset her life and writing rhythm, creating constant pressure for public appearances and interviews.

In more personal moments, the document details Szymborska's insatiable love of a good prank, too.

Appreciating Johannes Vermeer's masterpiece "The Milkmaid" in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, she suddenly jokes, with a gleam in her eye: "Now we take out the knife and cut it out."

But just before she cracked that joke, Szymborska read her poem inspired by the painting, which said that as long as the milkmaid pours the milk, the world does not deserve to end.

'Shutter Island' stays afloat at No. 1 with $22.2M

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Leonardo DiCaprio and Martin Scorsese continue to lure movie-goers to "Shutter Island," while James Cameron's "Avatar" has surpassed $700 million domestically.

The Paramount Pictures psychological thriller remained the No. 1 film for a second-straight weekend with $22.2 million, raising its 10-day total to $75.1 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

"Shutter Island" stars DiCaprio as a U.S. marshal caught in a tangle of delusions and paranoia while investigating the disappearance of a murderess at a remote hospital for the criminally insane.

"It is one of those movies that people, when they walk out of, they want to talk to somebody about," said Rob Moore, Paramount vice chairman. "When you have a movie that engages people and they want to talk about, want to debate, want to think about it, it certainly keeps you in front of mind for people."

AP

In this film publicity image released by Paramount Pictures, Leonardo DiCaprio and Mark Ruffalo, left, are shown in a scene from, "Shutter Island."

James Cameron's science-fiction blockbuster "Avatar" became the first movie ever to top the $700 million mark domestically. With a $14 million weekend, the 20th Century Fox release now is at $706.9 million domestically and $2.5 billion worldwide.

Some of that business comes from people seeing "Avatar" multiple times, but "I do believe first-time viewers are still discovering this movie," said Chris Aronson, head of distribution for 20th Century Fox. "We're getting people who don't go to movies often or never go to the movies. That's how special this movie is."

Debuting in second-place with $18.6 million was the Warner Bros. police romp "Cop Out," starring Bruce Willis and Tracy Morgan. Opening in third was Overture Films' horror tale "The Crazies" with $16.5 million.

Directed by Kevin Smith, "Cop Out" features Willis and Morgan as veteran detectives trying to retrieve a stolen baseball card from a memorabilia-obsessed gangster.

"Cop Out" exceeded the studio's revenue expectations and did well despite storms on the East Coast that kept some people at home, said Dan Fellman, Warner's head of distribution.

"We lost some money with the weather, but we certainly had a strong weekend," Fellman said.

"The Crazies" is a remake of George Romero's 1970s fright flick about a small town hit with an epidemic of insanity.

Scary movies typically vanish quickly because most horror fans rush out to see them over opening weekend. "The Crazies" earned better reviews than the average horror film, and its revenues on Saturday went up over Friday's opening-day numbers, often a sign that a movie might stick around longer at theaters.

"For a horror film, it looks like we've got a great run," said Kyle Davies, head of distribution for Overture.

1. ***"Shutter Island,"*** $22.2 million.
2. ***"Cop Out,"*** $18.6 million.
3. ***"The Crazies,"*** $16.5 million.
4. ***"Avatar,"*** $14 million.
5. ***"Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief,"*** $9.8 million.
6. ***"Valentine's Day,"*** $9.5 million.
7. ***"Dear John,"*** $5 million.
8. ***"The Wolfman,"*** $4.1 million.
9. ***"The Tooth Fairy,"*** $3.5 million.
10. ***"Crazy Heart,"*** $2.5 million.

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Cop Out

Friday		4:15	7:25	9:30
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:25	9:30
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:25	
Mon thru Thurs		4:15	7:25	

Bruce Willis, Tracy Morgan
Comedy • Rated R

Synopsis
Bruce Willis and Tracy Morgan team up for the Warner Bros. police buddy movie Cop Out with this Kevin Smith-directed production. From a script by Robb and Mark Cullen, the picture focuses on a detective duo who investigate the disappearance of a baseball card.

Shutter Island

Friday		4:00	7:00	9:45
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	9:45
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Mon thru Thurs		4:00	7:00	

Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo
Thriller • Rated R

Synopsis
Mark Ruffalo and Leonardo DiCaprio team up as a pair of U.S. Marshals who travel to a secluded island off the coast of Massachusetts to search for an escaped mental patient, uncovering a web of deception along the way as they battle the forces of nature and a prison riot in this Martin Scorsese-helmed period picture. Laeta Kalogridis adapts Dennis Lehane's novel of the same name, with Paramount Pictures and Columbia Pictures splitting production and distribution duties.

The Lightning Thief

Friday		4:20	7:10	9:40
Saturday	1:30	4:20	7:10	9:40
Sunday	1:30	4:20	7:10	
Mon thru Thurs		4:20	7:10	

Logan Lerman, Pierce Brosnan
Fantasy • Rated PG

Synopsis
Trouble-prone Percy Jackson is having problem in high school–but that's the least of his challenges. It's the 21st century, but the gods of Mount Olympus seem to have walked out of the pages of Percy's Greek mythology texts and into his life. Percy has learned that his real father is Poseidon, god of the sea, which means Percy is a demigod–half human, half god. At the same time, Zeus, the king of all gods, has accused Percy of stealing Zeus' lightning bolt…the original weapon of mass destruction.

The Wolfman

Friday		4:10	7:30	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:10	7:30	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:10	7:30	
Mon thru Thurs		4:10	7:30	

Benicio del Toro, Anthony Hopkins
Horror • Rated R

Valentine's Day

Friday		4:30	7:20	9:50
Saturday	1:10	4:30	7:20	9:50
Sunday	1:10	4:30	7:20	
Mon thru Thurs		4:30	7:20	

Julia Roberts, Anne Hathaway
Comedy • Rated PG 13

The Tooth Fairy

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:55
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:55
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Mon thru Thurs		4:05	7:05	

Dwayne Johnson, Ashley Judd
Comedy Drama • Rated PG

Avatar

Friday		3:55	6:55	10:00
Saturday	12:50	3:55	6:55	10:00
Sunday	12:50	3:55	6:55	
Mon thru Thurs		3:55	6:55	

Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

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Lil Wayne set to test how jails handle celebs

AP

In this Feb. 9, 2010 file photo, rapper Lil Wayne enters Manhattan criminal court in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Lil Wayne may be a self-professed gangsta with the gunshot wound to prove it, but he's made plenty clear how he feels about doing time behind bars.

"I'd rather be pushin' flowers," he raps in 2008's "A Milli," "than to be in the pen sharin' showers."

He might have to get used to it. At the apex of a career that has made him one of music's biggest sellers, the Grammy-winning artist is expected to start a yearlong jail term Tuesday after pleading guilty in a New York City gun case.

It would make him the latest in a string of rappers to go to jail after rising to fame—and the latest celebrity inmate to test law enforcement officials' ability to draw the line between providing special treatment and recognizing potential risks to high-profile convicts.

"It's a challenge," said Martin Horn, a former head of the New York City jails, where Lil Wayne's plea agreement calls for him to serve his sentence.

"It's not about setting (a celebrity) on a bed of roses, but it is about an obligation to every inmate to keep him safe."

For now, jail officials say only that they will assess the multiplatinum-selling Lil Wayne as they do every other new arrival and find an appropriate place for him among the city's roughly 13,000 inmates.

He might follow the path of rapper Foxy Brown, who spent about eight months in 2007 and 2008 in city jails on a probation violation after pleading guilty to assault in a fracas at a nail salon. Because of threats against her, she was held largely in protective custody in a cell of her own, with access to a day room, said Horn.

Music museum expands reach with archive, library

CLEVELAND (AP)—There's always been room at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum for the exciting, most popular relics, like Michael Jackson's "Thriller" jacket and John Lennon's Sgt. Pepper uniform. But most of the not-so-flashy mementos were tucked away in storage.

Visitors will get a chance to see those hidden artifacts beginning later this year, when the museum opens its library and archives in a recently completed high-tech building it shares with Cuyahoga Community College's creative arts programs.

The museum has begun moving photos, recordings, albums and covers, oral histories, scrap books and other packed materials from its iconic glass pyramid overlooking Lake Erie to the new, low-key building two miles away.

The items also include such gems as Jim Morrison's first poem, video from the 1981-82 Rolling Stones tour and personal letters from the Grateful Dead, Whitney Houston, Patti Smith and others. Posters of Alan Freed, the DJ credited with coining the phrase rock 'n' roll, and aging LP records also will find a home in the $12 million building. The records will be digitalized and available for listening.

The library will be the most comprehensive repository of rock history, with materials donated by hall of fame inductees and wannabes who see it as a way to preserve their stories, said Deborah Campana, librarian of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music.

Beyond its research value to scholars, the library should appeal to rock fans, Campana said.

"They've grown up loving it and when they see the artifacts associated with it, it takes their appreciation to a whole new level," she said.

Roger Ebert gets 'voice' grandkids can recognize

In this photo released by Harpo Productions, Inc., talk-show host Oprah Winfrey, right, and film critic Roger Ebert are seen during taping of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" at Harpo Studios in Chicago, Friday, Feb. 26, 2010.

AP

CHICAGO (AP)—Film critic Roger Ebert says computer programmers have captured his voice from movie commentary tracks so he can type what he wants to say and listeners hear a voice that sounds like him.

Ebert lost his ability to speak after surgery for cancer. He writes in Sunday's Chicago Sun-Times that a Scottish company has helped him regain a voice his grandchildren can recognize.

Ebert recorded commentaries for DVD movies before he lost his voice. A Scottish company called CereProc (SAYR'-uh-prok) blended digital recordings of Ebert speaking to make his text-to-audio voice.

Ebert writes that the voice will be heard predicting Oscar winners on a segment of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" airing Tuesday.

He says he may be able to use the voice for radio and Webcasts.

'A Prophet' wins French film industry top prize

PARIS (AP)—The French film industry has showered honors on director Jacques Audiard's Oscar-nominated "Un Prophete" ("A Prophet"), giving the movie France's coveted Cesar award for best movie.

Audiard was named best director and star Tahar Rahim best actor at Saturday's awards ceremony.

Isabelle Adjani received the best actress award for her role in "La journee de la jupe" ("The Day of the Skirt").

"A Prophet," which was nominated for an Oscar in the best foreign-language film category, collected nine awards in the annual French film industry competition. The movie won the second-place prize at last year's Cannes Film Festival.

The prison drama tells the story of an illiterate inmate who educates himself. During his six-year incarceration, he becomes involved in drug and smuggling circles. Rahim, a young Frenchman of North African origin, plays the film's main character, Malik.

Clint Eastwood's film "Grand Torino" won the Cesar for best foreign film.

'White Ribbon' earns top cinematography prize

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The German drama "The White Ribbon" has taken top honors from the American Society of Cinematographers.

The group's feature-film award Saturday night went to cinematographer Christian Berger for "The White Ribbon," director Michael Haneke's study of a small German town beset by mysterious violence on the eve of World War I.

"The White Ribbon" won out over a field that included "Avatar," "The Hurt Locker" and "Inglourious Basterds." At the Academy Awards on March 7, "The White Ribbon" is competing against those same three films plus "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince."

Television cinematography prizes went to Eagle Egilsson for an episode of "Dark Blue" and Alar Kivilo for the movie "Taking Chance."

Steven Tyler rejoins Aerosmith, tour announced

NEW YORK (AP)—After turmoil that included public squabbling, threats of a lineup change and a rehab stint, Aerosmith is back and ready to rock.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Famers have announced their "Cocked, Locked and Ready to Rock" European summer tour—with Steven Tyler.

The band also posted a video on its Web site in which Tyler, sitting with the rest of the band, jokes: "I just auditioned and I got the gig."

"We're coming your way and rocking your world! Look out because here we come," he says as he looks at guitarist Joe Perry and the group breaks out in laughter.

Aerosmith, which has been one of rock's enduring bands over the past three decades, has been in limbo since Tyler fell off a stage during an August concert in South Dakota, injuring himself and forcing the band to cancel the rest of their summer tour.

After that, Perry expressed anger that the group had been sidelined and said Tyler needed to get his act together. For his part, Tyler was quoted as saying he was interested in going solo, and soon the band was talking about replacing Tyler with another singer.

In December, Tyler checked in to rehab for a painkiller addiction, a problem he blamed on years of injuries suffered while performing with the band.

In an interview this week, bandmate Joey Kramer said: "Everything right now in Aero-land is very copacetic... We will carry on and do what we do best."

As far as their latest drama, he said: "The one common denominator that we still all have is that we all love to get up on stage and rock out, play music and bring joy to people. And we let the other drama, as of late, kind of filter itself out by the wayside and concentrate on more of what's important, which is the playing and the business at hand."

The band, best known for hits like "Walk This Way," has a long history of discord and overcame heavy drug abuse in the 1970s and early 1980s, but has been a mainstay in rock since enjoying a revival more than two decades ago.

Former president Bush: Faith helped in tough times

AP

Former President George W. Bush speaks at the Fort Worth Christian Schools Gala held at the Omni Hotel, Saturday, Feb. 27, 2010 in Fort Worth, Texas.

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP)—Former President George W. Bush says he turned to his faith during tough times in his eight years in office.

He told more than 1,100 people at a banquet Saturday night for Fort Worth Christian School that he didn't see how he could be president without prayer.

The former president also says he doesn't plan on staying in the public eye. He says he won't be "ou t there opining" or criticizing his successor.

Bush also says he's writing a book about his decisions in office so "you can draw your own conclusions."

Students presented Bush with a $5,000 check from fundraising efforts to help earthquake-ravaged Haiti. President Barack Obama has enlisted Bush and former President Bill Clinton to spearhead private fundraising for Haiti quake relief.

Going to the gym becomes exercise in embarrassment

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I just joined a gym, and I love everything about it except for one thing—the ladies' locker room.

I am modest so I use the private changing rooms when getting dressed. There are some women who feel very comfortable walking around in various stages of undress. Not only are they naked, they don't think twice about bending over to get into their lockers, or standing topless while blow-drying their hair.

In a place full of mirrors, seeing all this is difficult to avoid. I don't want to stop using the locker room because it's convenient. Is there anything I can do, or must I put up with the peep shows?

MISS MODESTY IN PRINCETON, N.J.

DEAR MISS M.: Women in various stages of nudity are not a "peep show." They are par for the course in women's locker rooms everywhere. And yes, there is something you can do: As you pass through on your way in and out, keep your eyes modestly downcast. That way, at most, you will see only a few naked toes. Or visit the gym during hours when the place is not so busy.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am stationed in Iraq. My husband is home taking care of our two teenagers—a 16-year-old boy and a 14-year-old girl.

My daughter has had several sleepovers at her friends'. On two separate occasions, the mothers allowed the girls to dye their hair. They did this without first consulting my husband.

Am I old-fashioned, or isn't this something a parent should decide for a 14-year-old? Did the other parents think that it was OK since I wasn't home to disapprove?

My husband is doing an excellent job of parenting while I am deployed, and he would never have allowed her to dye her hair. How should we handle this type of situation?

MOM ON DUTY IN IRAQ

DEAR MOM: Your husband should have told the adults plainly the first time it happened that he objected to the dye job. Since that didn't happen, please remain calm and remember that it's only hair—which will grow out. And now that you know the parents of your daughter's friends lack judgment, any sleepovers she attends should be in your home until your return from overseas.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My fiance and I are discussing being married at the courthouse before our actual wedding ceremony—months in advance. Our reason is he will finish graduate school and needs a place to stay—or else it's back home.

The second reason is, if we live in separate households, it will create two sets of household bills. Under one roof we can share the expenses and save ourselves an ample amount of money to put toward our actual ceremony and honeymoon.

This is our first marriage and, we hope, our last. We want to make it a memorable one. Does this make sense, and if so, how should we approach our potential guests about our plans to "tie the knot"?

TO DO OR NOT TO DO IN ALABAMA

DEAR T.D. OR NOT T.D.: The way to handle it is to be open and aboveboard. Let your friends—and extended family—know that you plan to be married quietly in a civil ceremony at the courthouse and have a formal renewal of vows, complete with gown, religious blessing, etc. to which they will be invited to share your joy several months later.

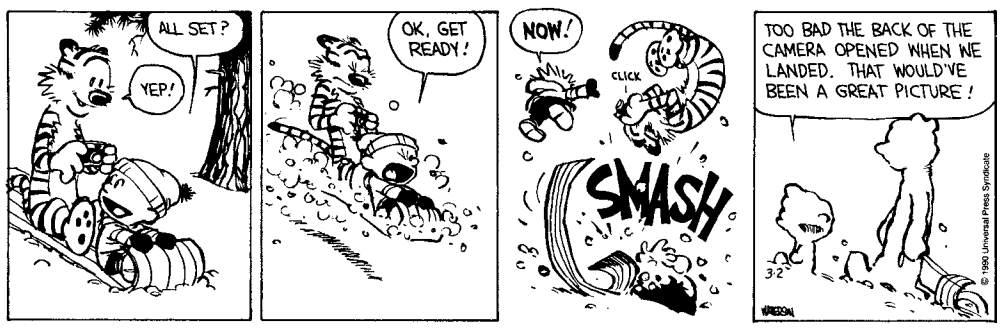
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $12 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis

HERE COMES THE FUTURE!
HERE IT IS!
GEE, IT WAS A LOT LIKE THE PAST
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www.garfield.com
Distributed by Universal Uclick
JIM DAVIS 3-2

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I'M OFFICIALLY A WINTER OLYMPICS GUY NOW.
EVERYONE WHO MADE THAT HAPPEN SHOULD BE SO PROUD.
I LAUGHED. I CRIED. I CHEERED.
I WAS DISAPPOINTED AT TIMES, BUT THEN INSPIRED. IT WAS EXHILARATING!
IT... UM... IT REALLY DOES MAKE YOU FEEL CLOSER WITH ALL THE WORLD'S PEOPLE.
THAT IF WE CAN JUST REACH OUT TO OUR FELLOW HUMANS... TO SHARE WITH EACH OTHER...
FINE... HAVE THE REST OF MY CARAMEL MACCHIATO.
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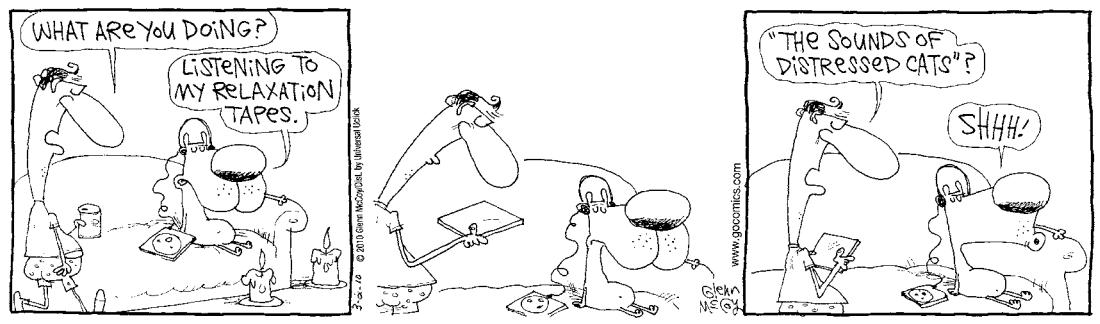
www.gocomics.com
3-2

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Just adorable
5 Potential syrup
8 Heavy reading
12 Somewhere out there
13 Big bother
14 Suitable
15 Highly rated
17 Incite
18 "Guinness Book" suffix
19 URL ending, often
20 Uncouth
21 — Francisco
22 Marshy area
23 Playwright Chekhov
26 Need
30 Stead
31 No mere mist
32 Notion
33 Panic-stricken
35 Take for one's own
36 Wall Street average
37 Previous night
38 Jazz style
41 Grand- —, N.S.
42 Twosome
45 Beige
46 Lasting 60 minutes
48 Carpet type
49 Dadaist pioneer
50 Arab commander
51 "Poppycock!"
52 Still
53 Townshend or Sampras

DOWN
1 Eatery
2 Roswell sightings
3 Lacking slack
4 Show fallibility
5 "Humpty Dumpty — a wall"
6 Leading man?
7 "— favor, señor"
8 Sightseers' aide
9 Gumbo ingredient
10 Periodicals, briefly
11 Spuds' buds
16 Read bar codes
20 — au vin
21 Old-time prospector
22 Plead
23 Carte lead-in
24 Zilch
25 Afternoon social
26 Scepter
27 Altar affirmative
28 Agt.
29 Corrode
31 A handful
34 Unruly hair
35 State with confidence
37 Burst forth
38 Number one
39 Reverberate
40 Support group?
41 Skin opening
42 Round top
43 Troop group
44 Shrek, for instance
46 Dinner for Dobbin
47 You can't stand to have it

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	B	A			P	A	S		A	F	R	O
L	I	R	A		A	R	T		P	R	O	D
G	R	I	P		W	A	R		P	O	N	D
A	D	A	P	T		B	O	O	R			
			R	O	E		P	R	O	M	P	T
B	A	Z	O	O	K	A		E	X	I	L	E
A	R	E	A		E	B	B		I	R	A	N
B	I	R	C	H		C	O	M	M	E	N	T
A	L	O	H	A	S		B	R	A			
			A	M	E	X		S	T	I	R	S
L	A	M	B		P	R	O		E	D	I	T
I	D	O	L		I	A	N		D	E	N	Y
D	O	P	E		A	Y	E		A	G	E	

Yesterday's answer 3-2

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				16				■	17			
18			■	19			■	20				
■	■	■	21			■	22			■	■	■
23	24	25			■	26				27	28	29
30				■	31			■	32			
33				34			■	35				
■	■	■	36			■	37			■	■	■
38	39	40			■	41			■	42	43	44
45				■	46				47			
48				■	49			■	50			
51				■	52				53			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bryce Dallas, Howard, 29; Chris Martin, 33; Jon Bon Jovi, 48; Lou Reed, 68

Happy Birthday: Don't let anyone bully you into something you don't want to do. You will have a change of heart that can disrupt your home and personal life. Before jumping from one lifestyle to another, consider the consequences. This is not the year to put up with anyone meddling in your affairs. Keep things out in the open. Your numbers are 7, 10, 14, 23, 26, 37, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Ask questions if you are confused about what's expected of you. Your contribution will determine how much you will get back and how far you can advance. Don't divulge secret information. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Get in touch with people you have worked with or know from a long time ago and you will get the information, help or suggestions you need to move forward. Taking action and making things happen will ease your stress. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Before you share your good ideas, make sure you aren't giving away too much information. Someone you least expect will try to take credit for something that you say or do. This is not the best time for love or personal gains. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Change is upon you and can bring about some interesting new contacts and a chance to take part in something that will enhance you mentally, physically or financially. Use your imagination and you will entice others to help you. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Plan a trip or sign up for a course that will change your outlook, lifestyle or routine. A money deal will attract you but do your homework before you get involved. Someone is likely to paint an inaccurate picture. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You need to enjoy the moment and forget about any of life's trials and tribulations. Socializing or just spending more time with the person you love most will help to ease your stress. A partnership will take a favorable turn. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't try to cover anything up. The more upfront you are, the sooner you can get on with personal and professional business. A creative outlet will inspire and motivate you in other areas of your life. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take control. Stick to your bottom line. Don't go over budget. Keep things simple and manageable and you will impress onlookers and entice others to join or help you out. Love and romance are in the stars. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Friends, neighbors or relatives will be difficult to handle. Make sure you have lived up to your promises. Inconsistent behavior will hurt your reputation and give others the chance to take over. Don't let a personal problem affect your productivity at work. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take an old idea and turn it into something

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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new and useable. Reaching out to people from your past will help you understand situations that you've been questioning for some time. Clear up unfinished business before starting something new. ✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You can put your money to better use if you invest in a project or educational pursuit. Get involved in a cause you believe in and you will have the opportunity to form an alliance with someone who will complement what you have to offer. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Take care of your responsibilities and you will avoid getting into trouble with friends and family. You can improve your environment once you recognize what you need in your life to feel greater satisfaction. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are not afraid to challenge or push your way to the top. You know how to get things done and are a strong and forceful leader.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	8		4		9			
				5	2			1
		7				5		
9	4			8				3
	1						7	
5				4			6	2
		1				8		
3			2	7				
			3		1		4	

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/02

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

8	6	5	3	1	7	4	2	9
3	7	4	9	8	2	1	6	5
9	1	2	5	4	6	3	8	7
5	2	1	6	9	3	7	4	8
4	8	6	7	5	1	9	3	2
7	3	9	8	2	4	6	5	1
2	5	3	4	7	9	8	1	6
6	9	8	1	3	5	2	7	4
1	4	7	2	6	8	5	9	3

Difficulty Level ★ 3/01

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

CHAI TEA **Solution: 7 letters**

I	B	A	J	N	U	P	L	A	I	N	D	L	O	C
N	D	R	A	H	C	I	T	A	M	O	R	A	I	O
D	G	N	I	X	I	M	S	R	A	T	S	N	N	N
I	L	W	I	G	E	P	M	L	A	P	A	O	S	C
A	E	O	Ⓑ	H	I	M	A	S	A	R	M	I	T	E
N	A	R	Ⓡ	C	R	S	H	Y	I	A	O	T	N	N
N	V	B	Ⓔ	A	A	A	U	A	N	C	T	I	E	T
E	E	S	Ⓦ	M	L	R	S	N	A	Y	S	D	N	R
E	S	O	O	L	V	S	I	R	E	E	U	A	O	A
R	E	R	A	E	A	C	D	T	Y	N	C	R	P	T
A	F	W	D	M	K	A	T	C	I	O	C	T	M	E
P	A	I	E	L	M	A	I	S	A	H	T	U	O	S
E	C	S	I	O	L	P	T	U	N	O	C	O	C	I
R	E	M	M	I	S	W	E	E	T	E	N	E	R	N
P	E	P	P	E	R	C	O	R	N	C	H	I	N	A

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Anise, Aromatic, Assamese, Ayurvedic, Brew, Brown, Cafes, Cardamom, Char, China, Cinnamon, Coconut, Cold, Components, Concentrates, Custom, Hindi, Honey, Indian, Irani, Latte, Leaves, Loose, Masala, Milk, Mixing, Palm, Peppercorn, Plain, Prepare, Punjabi, Simmer, South Asia, Spices, Spicy, Star, Sweetener, Traditional, Wallahs, Warm

Yesterday's Answer: Riversea

Treasury 7 Send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Universal Uclick, Attn: Wonderword, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free, 1-800-642-6480 Order online at upuzzles.com.

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JVA NO.	Position Title	Positions	Salary	Contract	Location
10-006	Dep. Dir. for Water Wastewater	One	Un-graded; Negotiable	Two-year	Water Wastewater, Saipan

Opening Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2010 **Closing Date:** March 4, 2010

JVA NO.	Position Title	Positions	Salary	Contract	Location
10-015	Technical Manager for Oil (TMO)	One	$79,616 - $88,462;	Two-year	Administration, Saipan

For more information about the position(s) being advertised, please stop by the Human Resources Office on the third floor of the Joeten Dandan Building.

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• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

ALL BORED

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Find today's solution in this section

Canada caps Olympics with gold medal in hockey

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)—Canada won the goal medal in its national sport of hockey on the last day of the Olympics, beating the archrival Americans and setting off a frenzy of celebrations from coast to coast.

The perfect finish to the Vancouver Games for the host country, Sunday's 3-2 overtime victory over the United States gave Canada its 14th gold medal, breaking the record for most won by a nation at a Winter Olympics. The Soviet Union in 1976 and Norway in 2002 each won 13.

"It doesn't feel real. It feels like a dream. It just feels like a dream," said Sidney Crosby, who scored the winning goal 7:40 into overtime. "Our team worked so unbelievably hard."

And they were under unbelievable pressure to win on their home ice. The entire hockey-crazed nation was stunned into silence when Zach Parise scored to tie the game for the U.S. with 24.4 seconds remaining in regulation.

But Crosby's shot from the lower part of the left circle in the extra period eluded goalie Ryan Miller, and Canada Hockey Place erupted in deafening cheers.

"Honestly," Hockey Canada executive director Steve Yzerman said, "it's an incredible relief."

Minutes after the game ended, delirious fans chanted, "Crosby! Crosby! Crosby!" and International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge gestured with both hands, calling for more cheers, before presenting Crosby with the gold medal. Celebrations spilled into streets of cities across the country. Hours earlier, long lines had formed outside Vancouver bars and restaurants as red-clad fans sought the perfect place to watch the game.

As "O Canada" played, the Canadian team stood shoulder to shoulder, arms over each others' shoulders. The U.S. team stood dejected, staring at the ice, many with their hands on their hips.

"I have never been in a more of a stressful game mentally," Canadian forward Jonathan Toews said, "because it takes everything from you, especially when they score a goal like that in the third period. You just got to find a way to get rid of that sinking feeling and go back on the ice. Shows you the courage and the pride we had for our country, and it was an incredible feeling to pull it off."

In one of the greatest games in Olympic history, Canada's collection of all-stars held off a young U.S. team that had upset the hosts 5-3 in round-robin play a week earlier. That loss forced the Canadians to play an extra game to reach the gold medal match.

Crosby had been scoreless the previous two games, but he had two post-regulation game-winners at these Olympics. He beat Switzerland with a shootout goal during the round robin.

It was close. It was nerve-racking. And, for the disappointed Americans, it was a monumental letdown in a tournament in which they were almost perfect.

"It's devastating," U.S. defenseman Jack Johnson said. "It was the biggest game any of us have played in."

Before the game, Crosby received a brief text message from Mario Lemieux, owner of the NHL's Pittsburgh Penguins, that read: "Good luck."

Now, Crosby joins Lemieux—whose goal beat the Soviet Union in the 1987 World Cup—and Paul Henderson, who beat the Soviets with a goal in the 1972 Summit Series, among the instant stars of Canadian hockey. At age 22, Crosby has won the NHL's Stanley Cup and the Olympics in less than a year's time.

"He's got a little destiny to him—his entire career, throughout minor hockey, junior hockey, NHL," Yzerman said. "So it's just another monumental moment in his career. And he's what, 22, still?"

It was also the second Canada-U.S. final in three Olympics. The Canadians won 5-2 in Salt Lake City in 2002 and appeared on the way to another comfortable victory when they took at 2-0 lead Sunday.

But they had to withstand a remarkable and determined comeback from a U.S. team that wasn't supposed to medal in Vancouver, much less roll through the tournament unbeaten before losing in the first overtime gold medal game since NHL players began taking part in the Olympics in 1998.

"No one knew our names," U.S. veteran Chris Drury said. "People know our names now."

Miller, the tournament MVP, was exceptional, and Parise scored a goal that—if the U.S. had won—would rank among the storied moments in American Olympic history.

With less than a half minute remaining and Miller off the ice for an extra attacker, Patrick Kane took a shot from the high slot that deflected off Jamie Langenbrunner to Parise, who shot it off Roberto Luongo's blocker and into the net.

Parise is the son of J.P. Parise, who scored two goals for Canada in the Summit Series.

Canada goalie Roberto Luongo didn't outplay Miller, but still proved he is a big-game goalie—something he has never been previously—by making 34 saves in his own NHL arena. Luongo won all five games he played in the tournament, including all four after replacing Martin Brodeur following the loss to the U.S. the previous Sunday.

"I'm just very frustrated," Miller said. "We got ourselves in a position to win from two goals down. Sudden death kind of stings, especially in this situation. I was happy, proud, the way I handled myself these two weeks."

Canada's Sidney Crosby skates with the flag after scoring the overtime winning goal in men's ice hockey gold medal final at the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, British Columbia, Sunday, Feb. 28, 2010.

AP

An exuberant end to a bittersweet Olympics

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)—An Olympics that began with the death of a luger ended Sunday with an exuberant celebration of Canada—reflecting a determined comeback by the host country's organizers and athletes.

A festive crowd of 60,000 jammed into BC Place Stadium for the closing ceremony, many of them Canadians abuzz over the overtime victory by their men's hockey team earlier in the day to give the host nation a Winter Olympics record of 14 gold medals.

The gaiety—capped by a boisterous rock concert—contrasted sharply with the moment of silence at the opening ceremony Feb. 12 for Nodar Kumaritashvili, the 21-year-old luger killed in a horrific training-run crash on the sliding track in Whistler just hours before that ceremony.

The speakers of honor on Sunday, chief Vancouver organizer John Furlong and International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge, each paid tribute to the young athlete.

"We are so sorry for your loss," Furlong said, addressing himself to the nation of Georgia. "May the legacy of your favorite son never be forgotten and serve to inspire youth everywhere to be champions in life."

Furlong then shifted to a more upbeat tone.

"I believe Canadians tonight are stronger, more united, more in love with our country and more connected to each other than ever before," he said.

He paid tribute to moguls skier Alexandre Bilodeau, winner of Canada's first gold medal at these games, and said of the final gold, won by the hockey team, "Our last one will be remembered for generations."

Rogge then pronounced the games closed, after describing them as "excellent and very friendly."

Neil Young, the durable Canadian folk-rock star, performed a lyrical version of his "Long May You Run"—and the Olympic flame faded away as he ended.

Canadian officials ensured an extra measure of poignancy at the ceremony by selecting figure skater Joannie Rochette as their flagbearer. Her mother died of a heart attack hours after arriving in Vancouver last weekend, but Rochette chose to carry on and won a bronze medal, inspiring her teammates and fans around the world.

"Yes, it's been a tough week for me," she said before the ceremony. "But I walk tonight into that stadium with a big smile on my face. ... I accomplished my goals, and I want to celebrate with my teammates."

Her entire team was greeted with a mighty roar when they joined the fast-moving, informal parade of athletes into the stadium. Among the cheerleaders was Prime Minster Stephen Harper, wearing a Canada jacket.

There were plenty of reasons for Canada and the United States to celebrate after 17 days of competition. The U.S. won 37 medals overall—the most ever for any nation in a Winter Olympics.

Canada, after a slow start, set a Winter Games record with 14 golds and sparked public enthusiasm in Vancouver that veterans of multiple Olympics described as unsurpassed.

The comeback by the Canadian athletes was mirrored by the resilience of the Vancouver Organizing Committee. It struggled with a series of glitches and weather problems early in the games, adjusted as best it could, and reached the finish line winning widespread praise for an exceptional Olympics—albeit one tinged with sadness.

Right from the start of the closing show, there was a spirit of redemption as the producers made up for an opening-ceremony glitch in which one leg of the Olympic cauldron failed to rise from the stadium floor. On Sunday, the recalcitrant leg rose smoothly and former speedskating medalist Catriona LeMay Doan—who missed out on the opening-night flame lighting because of the glitch—got to perform that duty this time.

Later came the traditional handover ceremony, during which the Olympic flag was lowered and presented to the hosts of the next Winter Games in 2014.

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson handed over the five-ringed flag to IOC president Jacques Rogge, who passed it on to Anatoly Pakhomov, the mayor of Sochi, Russia. That was followed by the Russian national anthem and a presentation about Sochi featuring opera, ballet, ice skating and giant glowing spheres called "zorbs."

Other key moments in the closing included a tongue-in-cheek revue of Canadian icons and symbols, featuring singing-and-dancing Mounties, tabletop hockey players, dancing canoes and flying moose and beavers.Canadian actors—including William Shatner and Michael J. Fox—made fun of national stereotypes. Fox, who has Parkinson's disease, received a huge ovation.

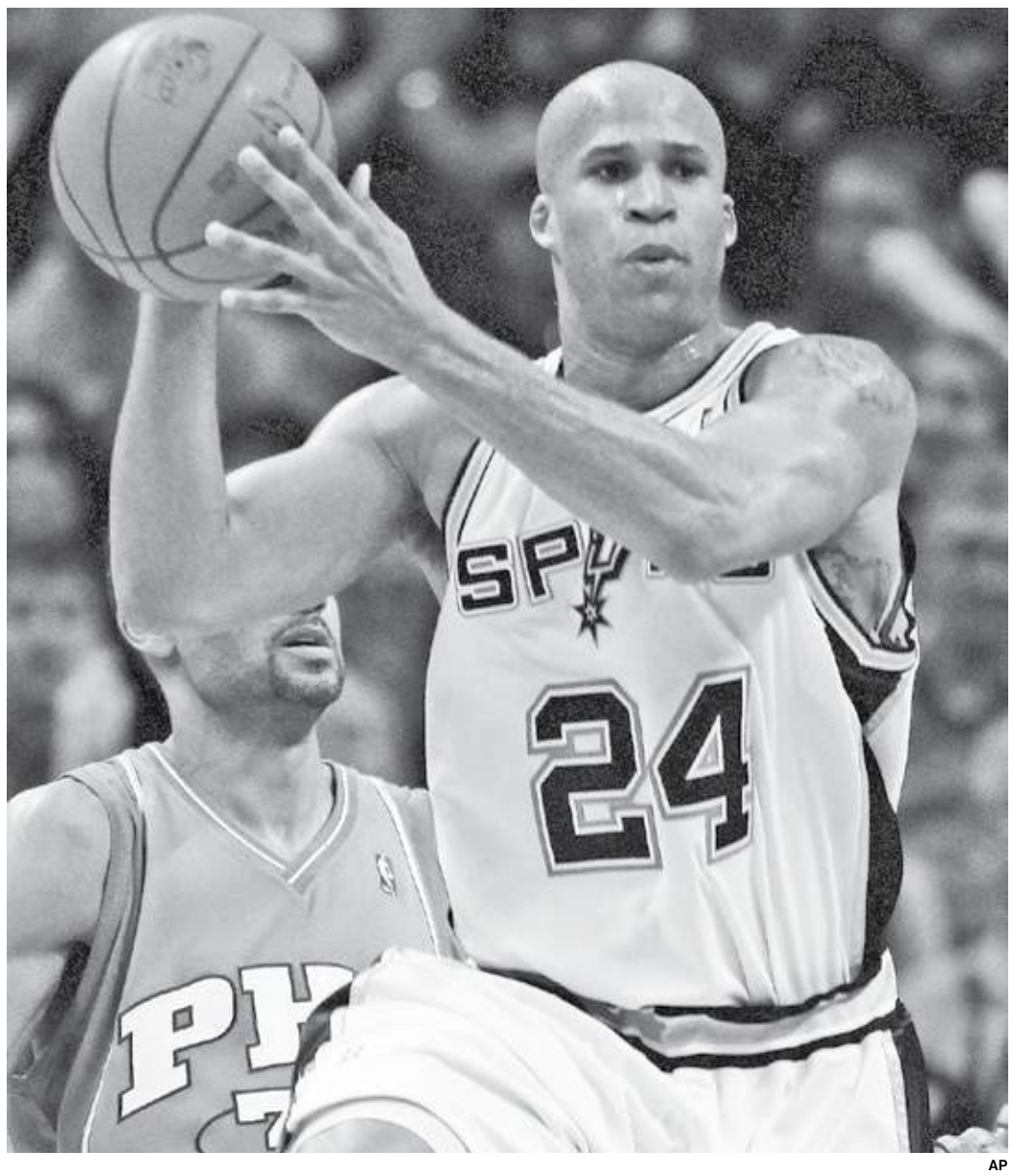
"I lived in the U.S. for 30 years," Fox said. "But if the U.S. is playing Canada in hockey, I'm sorry, I'm wearing a maple leaf on my sweater."

Jefferson, Spurs halt Suns' winning streak at 5

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Richard Jefferson scored 20 points in his best game since losing his starting job as the San Antonio Spurs beat Phoenix 113-110 on Sunday to end the Suns' five-game winning streak.

Amare Stoudemire had a season-high 41 points and added 12 rebounds for Phoenix, but Jefferson and the Spurs hung on late to hand the Suns only their second loss since the All-Star break.

Jason Richardson could've tied it with about 40 seconds left, but blew an uncontested dunk on a fast break.



AP

San Antonio Spurs' Richard Jefferson (24) looks to pass during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Phoenix Suns, Sunday, Feb. 28, 2010.

Lakers 95, Nuggets 89

At Los Angeles, Lamar Odom scored nine of his 20 points in the fourth quarter, and Pau Gasol had 15 points and 14 rebounds as the Los Angeles Lakers overcame an 11-point third-quarter deficit.

Kobe Bryant was just 3 for 17 from the field, finishing with 14 points and 12 assists. The two-time scoring champion was 1 for 9 in the first three quarters.

Carmelo Anthony scored 21 points for Denver before fouling out with 2:13 to play and the Nuggets down by four.

Mavericks 108, Hornets 100

At Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 36 points and Caron Butler had 19 in his return to the Dallas lineup as the Mavericks extended their NBA-high winning streak to seven.

The Hornets had cut what had been a 25-point deficit to 101-97 after Darren Collison's 3-pointer with 2:44 left capped the rookie's stretch of eight consecutive points. But New Orleans didn't get any closer and Collison, who had a season-high 35 points, had consecutive turnovers in the final minute that Dallas turned into baskets.

Hawks 106, Bucks 102, OT

At Atlanta, Joe Johnson scored nine of his 24 points in overtime, and Josh Smith had 22 points and 15 rebounds to help Atlanta end Milwaukee's winning streak at six.

The Bucks lost for the first time since trading for John Salmons, who finished with a season-high 32 points, including a straightaway 3-pointer that cut it to 103-102 with 9.7 seconds left in the extra period.

Jerry Stackhouse finished with 20 points in a reserve role for the Bucks, who had won six straight overall and six in a row on the road.

Magic 96, Heat 80

At Orlando, Florida, Rashard Lewis had 22 points, and Vince Carter added 17 to help Orlando overcome Dwight Howard's sub-par game.

Howard, who had 20 straight double-doubles, was in foul trouble most of the game and finished with seven points and five rebounds in 24 minutes.

Dwyane Wade, who returned to the Heat lineup after missing four games because of a strained calf, led Miami with 21 points.

O'Neal to have surgery to repair injured thumb

INDEPENDENCE, Ohio (AP)—Shaquille O'Neal's regular season could be over. Now the Cavaliers hope the center they acquired for the postseason will be back in time for the playoffs.

O'Neal will undergo surgery Monday to repair his injured right thumb. He was examined Sunday by Dr. Thomas Graham at the National Hand Center in Baltimore. Graham will perform the surgery.

The Cavaliers said they will update a timeline for his return following the procedure, but a typical recovery period is 6 to 8 weeks. There are seven weeks left in the regular season.

"I think we'll be all right," point guard Mo Williams said before learning O'Neal needed surgery. "We'll weather the storm while the big fella gets some rest."

The Cavaliers acquired O'Neal last summer with an eye toward the postseason, and more specifically Dwight Howard and Orlando after the Magic eliminated Cleveland in the Eastern Conference finals. O'Neal has played well for the Cavaliers this season, averaging 12 points and 6.7 rebounds in 53 games.

More importantly, he has played a big role in the Cavaliers going 4-1 against the Magic and the Los Angeles Lakers, two teams Cleveland struggled against last season and two teams likely to block Cleveland's path to a championship.

O'Neal injured the thumb Thursday at Boston when his shot was blocked by Glen "Big Baby" Davis with just over 7 minutes left in the first half.

Wizards 89, Nets 85

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Andray Blatche scored a career-high 36 points and had 15 rebounds, and Randy Foye hit two jumpers in the final 44 seconds for Washington.

Al Thorton added 20 points as Washington rallied from a 14-point first-half deficit to deny the Nets (6-53) their first winning streak of the season.

Yi Jianlian had 20 points and a career-high 19 rebounds for New Jersey, but missed two crucial free throws in the final 1:19. Devin Harris had 18 points and 14 assists.

Thunder 119, Raptors 99

At Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 29 points, and Nenad Krstic had a rare 3-pointer and added 16 points as Oklahoma City handed Toronto its third straight loss without All-Star forward Chris Bosh (sprained left ankle).

Jeff Green had 20 points and matched his career high with four steals for the Thunder. Andrea Bargnani and Sonny Weems each had 14 points to lead Toronto.

Kings 97, Clippers 92

At Sacramento, California, Tyreke Evans scored 22 points to help Sacramento win consecutive home games for the first time since mid-December.

Carl Landry scored 18 points, and Spencer Hawes had 16 points and nine rebounds for Sacramento. Chris Kaman had 18 points and 11 rebounds for Los Angeles.

Mahan edges Fowler to win Phoenix Open

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Hunter Mahan has been one of the most successful golfers not to win a tournament the last two years.

That's not the case anymore.

Mahan came from four strokes back to win the Phoenix Open by a shot over Rickie Fowler on Sunday in a 1-2 finish for former Oklahoma State players.

"It's always a little better to lose to a Cowboy," Fowler said.

The 27-year-old Mahan had an eagle and a pair of birdies in a late four-hole span to finish at 16-under 268. Mahan, whose first victory came at the 2007 Travelers Championship, closed with consecutive bogey-free 6-under 65s.

He's the eighth U.S.-born player still in his 20s to win more than one tournament.

Fowler, just 21 and a tour rookie, had a final-round 68 for the second runner-up finish of his young career, both of them in Arizona.

In his second PGA tour event last Oct. 25, Fowler lost in a three-way playoff to Troy Matteson in the Frys.com Open just down the road at the Grayhawk Golf Club.

South Korea's Y.E. Yang also shot a 65 to finish at 14 under, two off the pace. Last year's PGA Championship winner, Yang led until his tee shot went in the water at No. 17.

Mathew Goggin, Chris Couch and Charles Howell III tied for fourth at 13 under.

Third-round leader Brandt Snedeker struggled mightily with a 78 to wind up far back at 7 under.

The win was worth $1.08 million.

Although he hasn't won, Mahan has played well the past two years. He played on the 2008 Ryder Cup team and had six top-10s in 2009, including a runner-up finish at the AT&T National. His earnings the last two years topped $5 million.

"It's just finding a way to win. I just haven't been able to do it," he said. "So obviously it feels great to get off the year on my fifth tournament to win. It gives me a lot of confidence in myself that I'm doing the right things in my game, and it feels great, it really does."

A total of 0.67 inches of rain fell and wind reached 47 mph overnight at TPC Scottsdale and sprinkles lingered Sunday morning. But the rain subsided by the time the leaders teed off at noon.

The tournament, in its 75th year, was known as the FBR Open but returned to its longtime Phoenix Open name when Waste Management Inc. took over as the title sponsor this year.

The poor weather held the estimated final-round crowd to just under 44,000, well off last year's 60,000-plus. That brought the week's total attendance to nearly 426,000, down from 470,000 a year ago at the rowdy event that always draws the biggest crowds on the tour.

Yang, whose PGA Championship victory made him the first Asian-born golfer to win a major, eagled No. 10, then reeled off four consecutive birdies to take the lead at 15 under through 15 holes.

Trouble came, though, at No. 17, where his tee shot bounced into the water. Yang's 25-foot putt for par was on line but stopped an inch short of the cup, and the bogey left him at 14 under.

Mahan, meanwhile, hit his second shot on the par-5 13th 250 yards within 7 feet and made the eagle putt to reach 14 under.

His 18-foot birdie putt on the par-4 14th moved him ahead of Yang at 15 under.

The clincher came at the notorious 16th, the par 3 surrounded by bleachers filled with noisy, irreverent fans who cheer and boo with equal enthusiasm.

Mahan's tee shot caught the edge of the green and he made the subsequent 14 1/2-foot putt to regain the lead at 16 under.

"You still have a tournament to win, you can't really worry about the people," he said. "You just kind of have to block it out, but at the same time kind of enjoy it because you don't have that opportunity to have so many people watching you on one hole."

At the 15th, the open desert course's final par 5, Fowler chose to play conservative and lay his shot up rather than go for the green, which is surrounded by water. He said he felt he was a bit too far away from the pin to go for it, considering he was just one shot back and had what he felt were good birdie chances on Nos. 16 and 17.

"I felt that instead of bringing trouble into play ... I took the safe route," Fowler said.

That left him with a par, and he missed birdie putts of 14 1/2, 17 and 30 feet on the last three holes.

Mahan sent his girlfriend to his car after he found a crack in his driver early in his round.

"Luckily the rules staff ran her out to the car and she got it before the next tee shot," Mahan said, "because the next hole is a par 5. I really didn't want to hit a 3-wood off the par 5."

Pacquiao in final preparations for Cowboys Stadium

DAVE SKRETTA
AP SPORTS WRITER

Manny Pacquiao ran roughshod through four different sparring partners this week, and boxing's pound-for-pound king plans to churn through just as many on Saturday.

He's been peppering the speed bag, pounding the heavy bag and doing enough running to make Usain Bolt fall over in a heap. Under the watchful eye of trainer Freddie Roach, Pacquiao is putting himself in position to knock out Joshua Clottey when they fight on March 13 in Dallas.

"Manny is getting better all the time," Roach marveled after a training session on Friday at the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles. "I know Clottey is a big, strong guy. I respect him, he's a great fighter. But Manny I feel is going to overwhelm him with his speed and combinations, and I do believe we will be the first one to stop him in 12 rounds."

If it sounds simple, that's because Pacquiao has little trouble when fights are decided in the ring. Things aren't so easy when the fight is contested with words.

That continues to be the case with Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr., after their proposed blockbuster fell through because of drug testing protocol. Mayweather and his relatives have accused Pacquiao of using performance-enhancing drugs, either directly or by innuendo, while the Filipino champion has balked at taking a blood test within 14 days of a fight.

Pacquiao will instead fight Clottey at Cowboys Stadium, while Mayweather is headed for a showdown on May 1 against welterweight champion Shane Mosley. Along with the verbal jabs, Pacquiao and Mayweather can also fight over who generates bigger pay-per-view numbers.

"We're not happy with his remarks and Manny really wants to fight him in the future because of the remarks he made," Roach said. "Manny, sometimes when he's shadowboxing, he shows me how Mayweather fights and how he'll take care of the problem, and I've never seen that before.

"He's trying to ruin our reputations and so forth," Roach added, "but we want to fight him and we'll knock him out."

Promoter Bob Arum still believes that Mayweather never wanted to fight Pacquiao, and his strict adherence to blood testing—which is far more extensive than urine analysis required by the Nevada Athletic Commission—was his way of getting out of it.

"We don't have to be geniuses to know what they were trying to do. They were trying to get into Manny's head so he'd be discombobulated," Arum said. "Mayweather against Manny is a no-contest, no contest. Manny would wipe the ring with Floyd Mayweather."

SIS

From Page 28

Calvary's offense improved a bit in the second half, but still the best it could do was scored six points in the final canto. Mt. Carmel remained consistent with its scoring in the second half behind Lebria and Taylor's baskets.

The girls' junior varsity finals will be played on Friday, while the battle for third place is set for tomorrow with Calvary still waiting for the loser between the SIS-GCA game.

In the boys' junior varsity division, SIS booked the first finals ticket after crushing Calvary, 34-17.

Bo Barry was the lone double-figure scorer for SIS with 10 points, but it was enough to give the Geckos early control of the playoff match. He tallied eight of his total points in the first period, giving the Geckos a double-digit lead after eight minutes of play, 16-4.

Both teams struggled offensively in the second period, but SIS was a bit luckier as it scored five points against Calvary's none, upping the Geckos advantage to 17 at the break, 21-4.

Calvary played its best game in the third period, knocking down 11 points, but it was not enough to overhaul SIS' lead, as the Geckos were still ahead, 28-15, entering the final canto.

Calvary's bid for a come-from-behind win suffered a big blow when SIS held the former to two points in the fourth canto.

SIS' finals foe has yet to be determined as three teams are still fighting for the last finals berth. Mt. Carmel and GCA were squaring off in the second playoff game yesterday with the winner facing Agape Christian School for the second and last finals ticket tomorrow.

Girls

MCS 43 – Taylor 12, Lebria 10, V. Bartolo 4, Demapan 4, R. Kautz 2, M. Kautz 2, C. Bartolo 2, Mendiola 2.

CCA 14 – Sato 6, De los Santos 4, Reyes 2, Ito 2.

Scoring by quarters: 13-2, 25-4, 33-8, 43-14.

Boys

SIS 34 – Barry 10, Song 6, Halaby 6, Mailman 4, Jewell 2, Cepeda 2, Johnson 3, Ahn 2.

CCA 17 – Perez 6, Lee 5, Adelino 2, Alamer 2.

Scoring by quarters: 16-4, 21-4, 28-15, 34-17.

FATHER

From Page 28

The older Daly timed in at 43 minutes and .09 seconds against Bryce's 43:10.

Saipan Swim Club's Kento Akimaru completed the Top 3 finish in the 3km race with his time of 43.38.

Fifteen others joined the Tweener race, which had swimmers taking three laps of the 1-km course. Other finishers were SSC's Keanna Villagomez (43:56), Dawn Hammermeister (44:15), Tamiko Winkfield (45:19), Tamio Nishido (48:06), Suzy Kindel (48:11), Mark Sawyer (50:07), Paul Anthony (50:12), Junior Pamaran (50:21), Jake Van Dam (52:54), Brad Ruszala (53:50), Manny Sitchon (55:24), Joshua Berger (55:25), and Lewie Tenorio (55:26). Stan Good and Daniel Calvo were also entered in the 3km race, but did only two laps and timed in at 43:21 and 44:07, respectively.

In the longest race of the day, the 5km swim (Mighty division), Andres Buitrago finished ahead of four other participants, completing the five laps in 1:00:19. Buitrago's time surpassed the 1:02:00 Cooper Graf recorded last year in the same event.

Andrew Kimball had the second fastest time at 1:08:24, followed by sister Grace Kimball (1:10:22), Gary De Guzman (1:14:38), and Carol Lynn Pierce (1:15:26).

In the Meek event, which covered a distance of 1km, Lennosuke Suzuki outraced six others, timing in at 17:33. His SSC teammate, Taiga Sato, placed second with a time of 17:41:08.

The two 7-and-under SSC swimmers defeated much older foes in John Douglas (18:45), Derek Chambers (20:56), Jackie Van Dam (24:02), Maria Ornes (29:09), and Florence Antonio (44:32).

The race started at 8am and the water was a bit rough and cold, forcing participants to slow down in the early part of the swim.

Non-SSC swimmers joined the annual event to prepare for the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship and Tagaman Triathlon, which will be held on March 13 and 20, respectively.

Meanwhile, SSC thanked PIC for assisting the club during the early morning race.

YAMADA

From Page 28

dom Air pulled away in the last three innings after scoring six runs each in the fourth and sixth inning.

Yamada had a three-run homer in the sixth inning, while Dennis Cruz hit a two-run double.

Calikano 15, Red Eye 14

Calikano eked out a 15-14 win over Red Eye in extra inning.

Ben Leon Guerrero singled at the bottom of the eight inning, driving Emoa Iguel for the game-winning run.

Ben Cabrera paced Calikano with four RBIs, blasting a two-run double that sent the game in extra inning.

Calikano improved to a 5-7 record, while Red Eye absorbed its eighth loss in 11 games.

Advance 15, Go For Broke 14

Advance recorded a similar 15-14 triumph over Go For Broke.

Center fielder Sonny Sablan made the game-winning hit, as his single drove Dennis Ngeskebei home at the bottom of the seventh inning.

It was a come-from-behind victory for Advance, which trailed, 12-14, going into the bottom of the seventh inning.

Jun Taitano led off for Advance at the bottom of the seventh and doubled. Poland Masaharu batted next and singled. Ngeskebei also singled and brought Taitano home, while Masaharu reached home plate on Go For Broke's error to tie the game, 14-all.

Advance's next two batters flied out before Sablan connected on a single to grab the lead and the win.

San Roque 14, Blazers 11

Center fielder E.J. Tenorio went perfect at bat and logged five RBIs to power San Roque to a 14-11 win over the Blazers.

Tenorio homered in his last two at bats, drilling a three-run homer in the fourth inning and a two-run round-tripper in the sixth inning.

Wally Emul was 3-for-4 and scored three runs in San Roque's eighth win in 10 games.

The Blazers dropped to a 4-7 mark despite getting four RBIs from Justin Sablan.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	36	21	.632	–
Toronto	31	27	.534	5 1/2
Philadelphia	22	36	.379	14 1/2
New York	20	38	.345	16 1/2
New Jersey	6	53	.102	31

Southeast Division

Orlando	40	20	.667	–
Atlanta	37	21	.638	2
Charlotte	28	29	.491	10 1/2
Miami	29	31	.483	11
Washington	21	36	.368	17 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	46	14	.767	–
Chicago	31	28	.525	14 1/2
Milwaukee	30	29	.508	15 1/2
Detroit	21	38	.356	24 1/2
Indiana	20	39	.339	25 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	39	21	.650	–
San Antonio	33	24	.579	4 1/2
New Orleans	31	29	.517	8
Memphis	30	29	.508	8 1/2
Houston	29	29	.500	9

Northwest Division

Denver	39	20	.661	–
Utah	38	21	.644	1
Oklahoma City	35	23	.603	3 1/2
Portland	35	27	.565	5 1/2
Minnesota	14	47	.230	26

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	45	15	.750	–
Phoenix	37	24	.607	8 1/2
L.A. Clippers	24	35	.407	20 1/2
Sacramento	20	39	.339	24 1/2
Golden State	17	41	.293	27

Yesterday's Games

San Antonio 113, Phoenix 110
L.A. Lakers 95, Denver 89
Atlanta 106, Milwaukee 102, OT
Washington 89, New Jersey 85
Oklahoma City 119, Toronto 99
Orlando 96, Miami 80
Sacramento 97, L.A. Clippers 92
Dallas 108, New Orleans 100

PHOENIX OPEN SCORES

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (AP)–Scores Sunday from the $6 million Phoenix Open at the 7,216-yard, par-71 TPC Scottsdale course (a-denotes amateur):

FINAL ROUND

Hunter Mahan (500), $1,080,000	68-70-65-65–268
Rickie Fowler (300), $648,000	65-67-69-68–269
Y.E. Yang (190), $408,000	66-70-69-65–270
Mathew Goggin (115), $248,000	66-67-70-68–271
Chris Couch (115), $248,000	67-66-70-68–271
Charles Howell III (115), $248,000	69-66-68-68–271
Vaughn Taylor (90), $201,000	68-68-68-68–272
Bryce Molder (73), $156,000	68-67-70-68–273
Robert Allenby (73), $156,000	69-65-69-70–273
Joe Ogilvie (73), $156,000	71-66-66-70–273
Camilo Villegas (73), $156,000	62-69-71-71–273
Scott Piercy (73), $156,000	68-67-65-73–273
Matt Every (73), $156,000	63-70-68-72–273
Ryan Moore (53), $87,360	66-66-74-68–274
Ryan Palmer (53), $87,360	69-68-69-68–274
D.J. Trahan (53), $87,360	70-68-69-67–274
Rich Beem (53), $87,360	70-65-70-69–274
Andres Romero (53), $87,360	69-67-69-69–274
Fred Couples (53), $87,360	67-70-68-69–274
Alvaro Quiros (0), $87,360	67-66-71-70–274
Mark Wilson (53), $87,360	65-66-72-71–274
Ryuji Imada (53), $87,360	65-71-68-70–274
Michael Letzig (42), $42,525	69-70-67-69–275
Nick Watney (42), $42,525	74-63-69-69–275
Ian Poulter (42), $42,525	72-63-70-70–275
Zach Johnson (42), $42,525	66-68-71-70–275
Jeff Overton (42), $42,525	67-68-70-70–275
Greg Chalmers (42), $42,525	68-66-73-68–275
Pat Perez (42), $42,525	65-68-71-71–275
Chad Campbell (42), $42,525	68-68-69-70–275
Phil Mickelson (42), $42,525	68-68-72-67–275
Anthony Kim (42), $42,525	67-65-76-67–275
Jimmy Walker (42), $42,525	67-70-67-71–275
Lee Janzen (42), $42,525	69-67-67-72–275
J.P. Hayes (32), $27,043	69-68-70-69–276
Tom Gillis (32), $27,043	70-68-67-71–276
Kevin Streelman (32), $27,043	69-67-71-69–276
James Driscoll (32), $27,043	69-69-69-69–276
Bubba Watson (32), $27,043	69-70-68-69–276
Ben Crane (32), $27,043	68-70-71-67–276
Skip Kendall (32), $27,043	67-70-67-72–276
Matt Kuchar (25), $18,270	68-70-68-71–277
Jeff Maggert (25), $18,270	69-67-71-70–277
Chad Collins (25), $18,270	67-69-70-71–277
Fredrik Jacobson (25), $18,270	70-67-68-72–277
Ted Purdy (25), $18,270	68-69-71-69–277
J.B. Holmes (25), $18,270	69-68-71-69–277
Mark Calcavecchia (25), $18,270	68-68-67-74–277
Brandt Snedeker (25), $18,270	66-67-66-78–277
Nathan Green (20), $14,580	70-68-69-71–278
Ricky Barnes (20), $14,580	68-71-71-68–278
Parker McLachlin (15), $13,697	67-70-70-72–279
John Rollins (15), $13,697	69-66-72-72–279
Scott Verplank (15), $13,697	70-68-70-71–279
John Merrick (15), $13,697	70-67-67-75–279
Kenny Perry (15), $13,697	68-70-72-69–279
Sean O'Hair (15), $13,697	70-69-71-69–279
Kevin Na (15), $13,697	70-69-72-68–279
Chris DiMarco (11), $13,140	69-69-69-73–280
Johnson Wagner (11), $13,140	72-67-71-70–280
Justin Rose (7), $12,660	65-70-71-75–281
Geoff Ogilvy (7), $12,660	66-70-71-74–281
Carl Pettersson (7), $12,660	66-70-71-74–281
Scott McCarron (7), $12,660	68-71-69-73–281
J.J. Henry (7), $12,660	73-66-72-70–281
Billy Mayfair (7), $12,660	72-67-73-69–281
Briny Baird (3), $12,180	68-69-73-72–282
Brian Gay (3), $12,180	70-66-74-72–282
Heath Slocum (1), $11,820	69-70-71-74–284
Brian Stuard (1), $11,820	72-64-76-72–284
Paul Goydos (1), $11,820	70-67-75-72–284
Kevin Stadler (1), $11,820	66-73-77-68–284
Joe Durant (1), $11,340	66-71-73-76–286
Aaron Baddeley (1), $11,340	71-67-74-74–286
Ben Fox (0), $11,340	67-72-74-73–286
Michael Sim (1), $11,340	69-70-75-72–286
a-Braxton Marquez	74-65-70-78–287

FedExCup points in parentheses

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

SHIRLEY'S CAGING STANDINGS

MBI	4	0
World Resort	4	0
Aqua Resort	4	1
Fiesta Resort	3	1
Pacific Islands Club	2	1
TBK	2	1
Mobil	2	1
AON/NJ Plus	2	2
Shirley's	2	3
Pepsi	1	2
McGraw-Hill	1	2
Docomo/SGH	0	3
Bank of Guam	0	3
Hard Rock	0	3
Cell Pro	0	4

BUDWEISER SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Natibu	11	0
Man Amigos	12	1
Island Rebels	9	1
Chura	9	2
Ur Balls	9	2
SaiPal	9	3
San Roque	8	2
Freedom Air Flyers	8	4
Hitz	6	5
6-Pack	5	6
Calikano-Falcons	5	7
Blazers	4	7
X-Terminators	4	7
Go For Broke	4	7
Red Eye	3	8
Lancheros	3	8
G-Ballers	3	9
Ramblers	2	11
Berdax	1	8
Team Familia	1	9
Team Fuegu	1	10

MCGRAW

From Page 28

Marlon Sison scored 35 points for SGH/Docomo, which has yet to win in three games. Gerald Maliwanag tallied 18, while Lee had 15.

Despite having only seven players available for the game, SGH/Docomo stayed afloat and even led in the first half, as McGraw-Hill was a bit sluggish at the start of the match.

In the first period, SGH/Docomo led by three, 14-11, as McGraw-Hill had only three players scoring. At the end of the first half, SGH/Docomo clung to a two-point lead, 35-33, despite a 10-point explosion from Mendez. Maliwanag and Sison kept SGH/Docomo's distance, combing for 15 points in the second quarter.

However, McGraw-Hill began stepping up in the third period with Mendiola leading the way, firing 11 points. At the end of the third canto, McGraw-Hill was already ahead, 59-48, as Sison was the only player to drill more than a field goal for SGH/Docomo.

SGH/Docomo made repeated comeback bids in the fourth, but fell short.

In the second game, AON/NJ Plus recorded its second straight victory, winning by default against Pacific Islands Club.

PIC had only four players available for the match, ending the team's two-game winning streak. AON/NJ Plus improved to a 2-2 record.

McGraw-Hill 81 – Mendiola 19, Mendez 18, Diaz 14, Aguon 11, Cabrera 7, Buniag 4, Hideo 2, Guerrero 2, Matson 2, Merar 2.

SGH/Docomo 79 – Sison 35, Maliwanag 18, Lee 15, Ureta 9, Alvarez 2.

Scoring by quarters: 11-4, 33-35, 48-59, 81-79.

SSC-Tsunami Saipan Dual Virtual Meet

Tsunami Saipan's Thea Minor competes in the 50m butterfly swim.

Participants in the 50m freestyle get ready to plunge into the pool during SSC-Tsunami Saipan Dual Virtual Meet at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Tsunami Saipan and SSC swimmers plunge into the pool during the 100m freestyle race.

SSC's Taiga Sato waits for the start of the 50m backstroke swim.

SSC's Mike Villagomez at the starting block for the 100m freestyle swim.

SSC's Grace Kimball gasps for air.

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tsunami Saipan's Kaisei Toda in action during the 100m breaststroke swim.

A Tsunami Saipan swimmer joins the 100m backstroke event.

Tsunami Saipan's Angel De Jesus in pensive mood before the start of the 100m backstroke race.

Jefferson, Spurs halt Suns' winning streak at 5

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Sports

Canada caps Olympics with gold medal in hockey

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SIS, Mt. Carmel gain finals seats

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan International School and Mt. Carmel School routed separate foes in the first round of the playoffs to advance to the finals of their respective divisions in the Coalition of Private School Sports Association Basketball League.

Mt. Carmel whipped Calvary Christian Academy in the girls division, 43-14, yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Lady Knights will challenge in the finals on Friday the winner in the playoff match between Grace Christian Academy and Saipan International School.

The Lady Geckos and Lady Eagles were dueling for the second finals berth last night and results of the match were unavailable at press time.

Amy Taylor and Kaylani Lebria led Mt. Carmel's semifinals win over Calvary, firing 12 and 10 markers, respectively.

Mt. Carmel was off to a good start behind Taylor's six points, as the Lady Knights led at the end of the first period, 13-2. The lead ballooned to 21, 25-4, as the CCA Sharks was held to a field goal in the second period, while Mt. Carmel scored 12 more points.

See SIS on Page 26

Mt. Carmel School's Amy Taylor, right, is guarded by Calvary's Masami Saito during their playoff game in the private school junior varsity caging yesterday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Kieran Daly leads son Bryce in a sprint to shore after completing the 3-kilometer race in Saturday's 5th Annual Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim in the waters off Pacific Islands Club.

Father and son reign in 'Meek and Mighty'

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Father and son Kieran and Bryce Daly led winners in the 5th Annual Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim held Saturday in the waters off Pacific Islands Club.

The Dalys kept each other's company in the 3-kilometer swim or the Tweener division race before Kieran beat his son in a friendly, but down-to-the wire finish. Bryce and Kieran resurfaced in the water about the same time, but the latter sprinted to the shore to finish ahead of the former.

See FATHER on Page 26

McGraw-Hill breaks into win column

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

McGraw-Hill recorded its first victory in the 2nd Annual Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball League after thwarting the hard-fighting Saipan Grand Hotel/Docomo, 81-79, on Saturday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

McGraw-Hill lost its first two games in the 15-team league and wasted a 13-point lead in the fourth quarter before clutch baskets from Peter Mendiola and Walter Mendez bailed the team out of trouble.

Despite having a depleted lineup and trailing by double digits a couple of times, SGH/Docomo managed to threaten McGraw-Hill, cutting the lead to a deuce after James Lee's triple, 76-77, with 54 seconds left in the fourth quarter.

When McGraw-Hill went for its offensive set, Mendiola capitalized on SGH/Docomo's failure to go back on transition defense quickly and made a fastbreak layup to up the lead to 79-76.

McGraw-Hill then regained possession when Mendez intercepted Fernando Ureta's pass to Lee at the backcourt. Mendez later canned a short jumper to seal the win for McGraw-Hill.

Mendiola paced McGraw-Hill with 19 points, Mendez chipped in 18 and Jerry Diaz and Rufino Aguon contributed 14 and 11 markers, respectively.

See MCGRAW on Page 26

McGraw-Hill's Walter Mendez, right, dribbles out of the defense of Saipan Grand Hotel/Docomo's Ray Alvarez during their game in the Shirley's caging on Saturday at the JP Center Basketball Court.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Yamada lifts Freedom Air past Lancheros

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Shane Yamada, seen here in a pre-game warm-up, homered twice in Freedom Air's 23-11 win over Lancheros in the Chamolinian softball league on Friday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Left fielder Shane Yamada homered twice, leading Freedom Air to a 23-11 win over Lancheros during their game in Chamolinian Softball Association's 2009 Budweiser Slow-pitch Softball League on Friday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Yamada, who leads the league in the batting race, homered in the second and sixth inning for his five RBIs and Freedom Air's 8-4 record.

Lancheros, which dropped to a 3-8 mark, was still in the game after three innings, behind by only three, 8-11. However, Free-

See YAMADA on Page 26